

# SIGMA TAU DELTA TAUME

## SPRING BOARD MEETING

Pittsburgh  
March 18-19, 2024



## Airborne Allergies - Nuts, Perfumed Lotions/Sprays

For the safety of our members, please refrain from bringing / wearing anything containing nuts (including nut-flavored coffees/creamers), scented lotions, etc. while in meetings.



*\* Clicking on a report name in the Table of Contents will take you directly to that report.  
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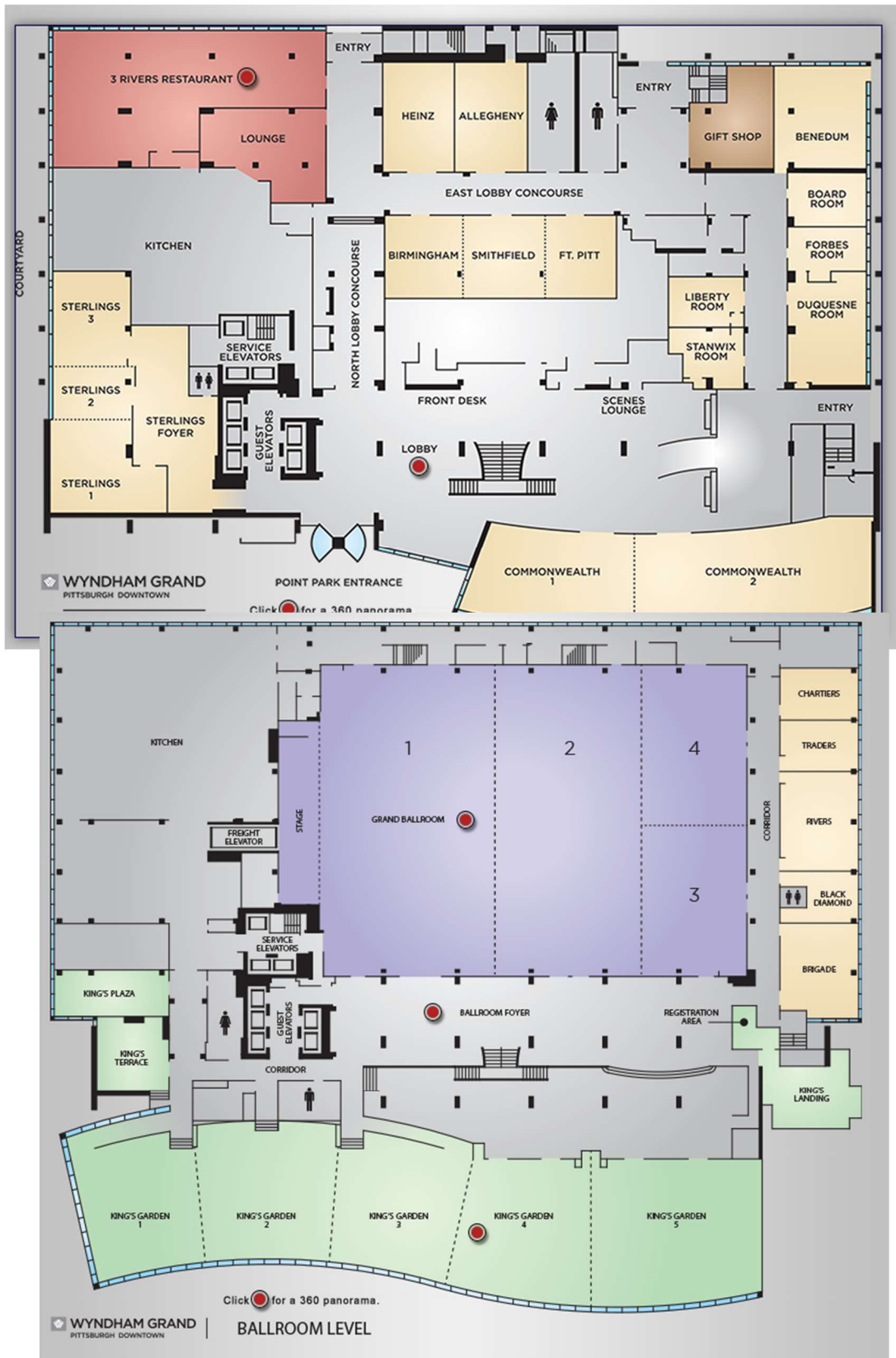


## Spring Committee Meetings



## Spring Committee and Board Meeting Map

**Tuesday, March 18 – Wednesday, April 19, 2025**



## Fall Committee, Advisory Council, and Task Force Meetings

### SCHEDULE

Date/Time	Committee	Leader(s)	Members	Location
<b>Tuesday, March 18</b>				
2:30 – 4:30 pm	Executive Committee	Bartlett	Comeford, Dillard, Schroeder, Stemmler, and Hlinak	Innovation
By 4:00	Check-in			
4:45 – 6:00 pm	Dinner on your own			
6:15 – 7:15 pm	Student Leadership	Koors-Foltz and Taylor	All Student Leaders	Duquesne
6:15 – 7:15 pm	Regents	Krone and Steele	All Regents	Liberty
6:15 – 7:15 pm	Alumni Advisory Council	Nolde	Saccavino, McCole, Mudd	Innovation
6:15 – 8:00 pm	Strategic Planning	Dillard	Bartlett, Comeford, Reeves, Rhea, Hlinak, Lockwood, and Szostak	Stanwix
7:15 – 8:00	Student Leadership, Regents, and Alumni Advisory Council Regents Joint Meeting	Koors-Foltz, Nolde, Taylor, Krone, and Steele	All Student Leaders, Regents, and Alumni Advisory Council members	Duequesne
8:15 – 9:30 pm	Convention Committee	Dillard Schroeder Stemmler	Koors-Foltz, Nelson, Nolde, Saccavino, Adams, Hlinak, Kent, Mudd, Newsome, Sides, Johnson, Lok, Perry, Mirmotahari	Benedum
	Scholarships Committee	Gates	Bartlett, Brown, Steele, King, McCole, Reeves, Rhea	Stanwix
<b>Wednesday, March 19</b>				
7:00 – 8:15 am	Breakfast on your own			
8:30 – 9:30 am	Service Committee	Stemmler and Taylor	Brown, Steele, King, Lockwood*, Nolde*, Brady, Palmisano, Russell, Mudd, Newsome, Richards <small>*unavoidable overlap—choose Service or Membership Init.</small>	Benedum
8:30 – 9:30 am	Membership Initiatives Task Force	Comeford	Koors-Foltz, Krone, Schroeder, Williams, Lockwood*, Nolde*, Elderkin, Mahlum, Reeves, Rhea, Szostak	Board
9:45 – 10:45 am	Communications Committee	King Krone	Bartlett, Gates, Koors-Foltz, Kent, Mudd, Jockell, Sides	Stanwix
9:45 – 10:45 am	Partnerships	Steele	Nelson, Stemmler, Taylor, Lockwood, Nolde, Chinique, Stocks, Hlinak, McCole, Newsome, Richards	Liberty
11:00 – 12:00	Board Meeting	Bartlett	All Board Members and Affiliates, CO, Student Leaders, and Sigma Kappa Delta Representative(s)	Sterling's 1





12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch (group pre-order and delivery)			
1:00 – 6:00 pm	Board Meeting	Bartlett	All Board Members and Affiliates, CO, Student Leaders, and Sigma Kappa Delta Representative(s)	Sterling's 1
6:30 – 6:45 pm	Convention Opening Ceremony			



## Committee Charges

### Communications–Co-chairs: Carre King & Kassia Krone

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review and evaluate policies and procedures pertaining to all publications and other materials disseminated by or for the organization.</li> <li>To review policies and procedures pertaining to The Sigma Tau Delta <i>Rectangle</i> and <i>Review</i> and writing awards.</li> <li>To oversee the website and to explore options for coordinating online communication.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>4.b.</b> <i>Examine resources in place for Advisors, increase networking, and provide a new societal website area dedicated to Advisors [includes review of current website materials and development of networking database](with Regents)</i></p> <p><b>4.c.</b> <i>Enhance faculty members' professional development (at Convention and virtually) by giving them a chance for a scholarly presentation or webinar for student members, or a chance for a collaborative workshop or publication or service opportunity [Revised to separate and assign foci to specific committees for final year: <b>Communications:</b> Use social media to promote Advisor accomplishments and develop possible webinars utilizing Advisor expertise or for Advisor and other members' professional development (both with Regents); <b>Regents with Communications:</b> develop possible webinars using Advisor expertise or for Advisor and other members' professional development.]</i></p> <p><b>5.b.</b> <i>Increase advocacy in and for the humanities, and especially for English-related disciplines (as part of website redesign and potentially in other activities)</i></p> <p><i>See specific focus related to <b>5.d.</b> Consider new strategies that better self-promote and increase visibility and importance of Sigma Tau Delta to the discipline.</i></p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with other committees (Regents, Partnerships, Service, etc.), consider professional opportunities (webinars, presentations, publications, etc.) for Advisors and faculty members and use social media to promote Advisor accomplishments. (Specific focus to complete SP Objective 4.c.)</li> <li>By December deadline, evaluate Outstanding Literary Journal Award applications and make determinations about awards, including a possible separate award for online journals.</li> <li>Provide ongoing feedback to Executive Director and CO regarding minor website updates (may be on behalf of other committees).</li> <li>Discuss issues surrounding generative AI in relation to Communications tasks (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI in award submissions for journals or paper awards, applications, and letters of recommendation are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of working toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with the CO and Convention Committee about journal display at Convention.</li> <li>In coordination with the Convention Committee, introduce Convention attendees to the work of this committee.</li> <li>Coordinate with the Editor of Publications in the selection process for interns and readers.</li> </ul> <p><b>New Website Development (throughout the year) with CO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the CO on our website redesign aimed at an updated look and easier navigation so users can find important information, including a clear navigation to all of the English Honor Societies.</li> <li>In conjunction with the Regents Committee, review current materials and offer suggestions for new materials for the website area dedicated to Advisors and items that can be cut (SP Objective 4.b.).</li> <li>In conjunction with the Regents and Student Leadership Committees, review and offer suggestions for new materials for the website area dedicated to students and items that can be cut.</li> <li>As needed, assign other content areas from the website (e.g., Awards, Alumni, etc.) for similar review (new materials and items to be cut) to specific committees or groups (e.g., Scholarships, Service, Alumni Representatives, etc.).</li> <li>In relation to 5.d. (and 5.b.), create a website area specifically for advisors to access materials to use on their campuses for promotion and visibility locally and in the discipline and beyond.</li> <li>Decide which components of the website will go behind member login (such as links for Convention submissions, scholarship applications, Board information, and so on) in consultation with the CO and Executive Committee.</li> <li>Decide timeline for website in consultation with the CO and Executive Committee.</li> </ul>

**Board Members:** Lexey Bartlett, Amy Gates, Autumn Koors-Foltz;

**CO:** Katie Mudd, Namon Kent; **SLs:** Deanna Aniles (HP ASR) Sophia Jockell (S SR)



## Convention Committee–Chair: Leigh Dillard, Shannin Shroeder, Kevin Stemmler

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To plan, coordinate, and publicize each annual international convention.</li> <li>To make recommendations about site selection and decisions about budget, speakers, registration fees, the Common Reader, academic and anniversary awards, convention awards, and any other matters related to the convention.</li> <li>To consider convention speakers for honorary membership in the Society.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b>  <b>1.e.</b> Increase access to Convention and explore a wider array of presentation opportunities (with Regents)  <b>4.c.</b> Enhance faculty members' professional development (at Convention and virtually) by giving them a chance for a scholarly presentation or webinar for student members, or a chance for a collaborative workshop or publication or service opportunity [Revised to separate and assign foci to specific committees for final year:  <b>Convention:</b> Continue to include and expand workshops or other opportunities (including related webinars) for Advisor professional development or using Advisor expertise, schedule permitting.]  <b>4.e.</b> Consider additional incentives for faculty to reduce Convention costs</p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinating with the CO, update (as needed) the current schedule for Convention planning and implementation and revise the template for scheduling future convention activities.</li> <li>Discuss issues surrounding generative AI in relation to Convention tasks (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI in convention submissions and awards are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of working toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> <li>In relation to SP Objective 1.e., consider ways to increase access to the Convention, if that is feasible (with Regents).</li> <li>Using the agreed-upon timeline, accept submissions; convene evaluators; and select papers, roundtables, and workshops for the Convention.</li> <li>Continue to include and expand workshops or other opportunities (including related webinars) for Advisor professional development or using Advisor expertise, schedule permitting. (Specific focus to complete SP Objective 4.c. and in consultation with Regents and Communications.)</li> <li>Continue increasing the scope and/or access to career and professional development workshops as a component of the Convention in response to changing economic conditions and to the SP.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with chair(s) for 2026 Convention, who (with input from the existing Convention Committee) should line up Common Reader and keynote speaker(s) by February.</li> <li>By agreed-upon timeline and in coordination with Student Leadership (SL) and members of other committees, create offerings for 2026 Convention sessions/panels to address interests of key populations, as determined by this committee or as suggested by other committees.</li> <li>As part of our work with diversity, equity, and inclusion, monitor the work of judges for convention awards, ensuring fair and ethical consideration of all submissions.</li> <li>Select winners of Convention awards before Convention or, in the case of sponsored awards such as the Stemmler/Dennis LGBT&amp; Awards, provide all eligible submissions to appropriate judges as per written guidelines for those awards.</li> <li>Share survey results with and brainstorm during a Convention post-mortem with incoming 2026 Convention chair and CO staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Autumn Koors-Foltz, Michaelann Nelson  <b>CO:</b> Matt Hlinak, Namon Kent, Jessica McCole, Nicole Adams  <b>SLs:</b> Crystal Dilling (SW SR), Carmen Lok (SW ASR), Lucy Perry (E ASR)  <b>Sigma Kappa Delta:</b> Donna Newsome, Bradley Sides  <b>Non-Board:</b> Emad Mirmotahari</p>	



Executive & Board Development Committee–Chair: Lexey Bartlett	
Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To exercise all executive powers of the Society, excepting any specifically retained by the full Board in official sessions.</li> <li>To provide input on the Society's annual budget; to oversee disposition and investment of Society funds, with an emphasis on preservation of capital and benefits to student members; to advise on the desirability and/or feasibility of additional expenditures.</li> <li>To develop and review policies and processes which enable the Board to recruit and mentor potential new Board members; to nominate candidates and implement elections; and to review elections policy and procedures and recommend any changes for future elections.</li> <li>To discuss and evaluate recruitment, selection, and training of Alumni Leadership.</li> <li>To conduct the annual evaluation of the Executive Director.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>3.d.</b> Review geographic concept of regions as part of our diversity to ensure representation in overlooked populations or chapters (rural, isolated, long-distance, etc.)</p> <p><b>5.e.</b> Study the possibility of redistributing Regions in order to provide a more equitable distribution</p> <p><b>6.d.</b> Increase NEHS support, exploring additional resources dedicated to NEHS and expanding representation on the Board or in the Board committees</p> <p><b>7.b.</b> Improve transparency of budgets, with an emphasis on assessment and financial planning</p> <p><b>7.d.</b> Examine the organizational structure in the CO; revise the flow-chart</p> <p><b>7.f.</b> Create a sustainable chapter development plan at local, Regional, and international levels (with ED and NEHS ED)</p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review list of standing committees and of proposed task forces and committee charges/foci completed by President.</li> <li>As liaisons to other committees, discuss the ongoing work of those committees, with an eye toward future or modified charges.</li> <li>Complete setup of the Board Dashboard and associated Google Drive archive.</li> <li>By Fall Board meeting, determine who is eligible and, if appropriate, nominate a candidate to receive the Delta Award.</li> <li>Recruit 2026 Convention chair.</li> <li>Review any remaining Centennial Task Force recommendations regarding additional 2024-2025 plans to close out the Centennial celebration up to and through Convention.</li> <li>Discuss issues surrounding generative AI in relation to all areas of Society work, with officers acting as liaisons from other committees (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Vital topics include the use of AI in relation to submissions for convention presentations, journal publication, and various awards; applications for scholarships, Student Leadership, and other Board positions; and letters of recommendation; but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of working toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> <li>By Fall Board meeting, draft a Board Manual to be housed on the Board Dashboard and possibly on the Board pages of the Society's website (<a href="http://www.english.org/board">www.english.org/board</a>).</li> <li>Review Regional organization in line with SP Objectives 3.d. and 5.e.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the previous year through to Convention, as needed, recruit and interview candidates for open Board positions and make recommendations to the Board.</li> <li>Discuss the ongoing work of committees, with an eye toward future or modified charges.</li> <li>After Convention, review and discuss updates and recommendations from Past Presidents Advisory Council.</li> <li>After Spring Board meeting, and in conversation with SP Committee, review and discuss the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan.</li> <li>Before June, evaluate applications for Student Advisor (SA), conduct interviews, and make appointment.</li> <li>Review the pilot appointment of an Associate Alumni Representative (AAR) and the Board assignments and other activities of the Alumni Representative team.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Ami Comeford, Leigh Dillard, Shannin Schroeder, Kevin Stemmler</p> <p><b>CO:</b> Matt Hlinak</p>	

## Partnerships Committee–Chairs- Felicia Steele

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To explore possibilities for Society partnerships with organizations, foundations, and businesses.</li> <li>To coordinate the internship application processes with Penguin, NCTE, and others, working with the Scholarship Committee.</li> <li>To maintain and evaluate current partnerships.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b>  <b>1.c.</b> <i>Develop strong network of educational and industry partnerships, including internships, that emphasize career pathways in and beyond English-related disciplines [marked complete on the SP, but included here for reference as we move into the next phase with current partners]</i>  <b>3.c.</b> <i>Support social justice efforts, both within and beyond the organization [shared with Service]</i></p> <p><i>See specific focus related to 5.d.          (Consider new strategies that better self-promote and increase visibility and importance of Sigma Tau Delta to the discipline.)</i></p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keeping in mind the deadlines for internships, make recommendations for new or increased internship grants. Review fall or spring part-time internship grants, service internships, and alumni internships that cover the year following the BA or MA degree. Bring any recommended changes to the Board.</li> <li>Develop a plan for a fast approval process when partnership opportunities arise that need an immediate response (perhaps a combined group of reviewers, such as four members of the Executive Committee and three members of Partnerships).</li> <li>By the Fall Board meeting, analyze the number of applicants and/or recipients and determine which awards and internships to continue, expand, or eliminate.</li> <li>Consider increasing service and professional opportunities for Advisors and faculty members with partners, including (in collaboration with the Communications and Service Committees) possible presentation or publication opportunities.</li> <li>By Fall Board meeting, research possible new partnerships. Develop targets to approach for partnership options based on services we can provide in a partnership (such as reviewing applications for an award) or considering additional different kinds of benefits they could provide our members (such as a space in a program they run, memberships, etc.).</li> <li>In connection with SP Objective 5.d., promote Sigma Tau Delta using our connections to LULAC, NHA, etc.</li> <li>Using the agreed-upon fall award/internship timeline, judge award and internships applications and announce recipients.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the agreed-upon spring award/internship timeline, judge award and internships applications and announce recipients.</li> <li>In coordination with the Convention Committee, introduce Convention attendees to the work of this committee.</li> <li>By the Spring Convention, investigate one or two potential new partners for internships, and, if possible, secure one or two new partnerships.</li> </ul> <p>In connection to work previously done on SP Objective 1.c., maintain partnerships work by reviewing existing partnerships and see if there are any changes or adjustments or maintenance work to do. Keep data on when partnerships began, level of engagement on both sides, and track benefits for each partnership.</p>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Michaelann Nelson, Kevin Stemmler, Kelly Taylor  <b>CO:</b> Jessica McCole  <b>Affiliates:</b> Chris Lockwood, Tiffany Nolde  <b>SLs:</b> Matthew Chinique, Kaylee Jo Stocks  <b>Sigma Kappa Delta:</b> Donna Newsome, Bradley Sides</p>	





## Regents Committee–Co-Chair: Kassia Krone, Felicia Steele

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share best practices among Regents and Regions.</li> <li>To plan and run Advisor activities online and/or at conventions—workshops, social events, or roundtables—and to review Advisor materials on the website, with an emphasis on training/mentorship of new/transitioning Advisors.</li> <li>To discuss and evaluate recruitment, selection, and training of student leadership.</li> <li>To administer the Common Reader awards; the Outstanding Chapter and Outstanding Chapter Advisor awards; and to explore new awards to encourage chapter, inter-chapter, or regional programming.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>1.e.</b> Increase access to Convention and explore a wider array of presentation opportunities (with Convention)</p> <p><b>2.d.</b> Revise job descriptions for Student Leadership, promoting opportunities in support of our mission and emphasizing professional development (shared with Student Leadership)</p> <p><b>4.b.</b> Examine resources in place for Advisors, increase networking, and provide a new societal website area dedicated to Advisors [includes review of current website materials and development of networking database](with Communications)</p> <p><b>4.c.</b> Enhance faculty members' professional development (at Convention and virtually) by giving them a chance for a scholarly presentation or webinar for student members, or a chance for a collaborative workshop or publication or service opportunity [Revised to separate and assign foci to specific committees for final year: (<b>Regents:</b> develop a resource bank of Advisors' expertise to use for events or other opportunities and (<b>with Communications</b>) develop possible webinars using Advisor expertise or for Advisor and other members' professional development.)]</p> <p><b>5.c.</b> Encourage chapters to increase the society's visibility in their local areas (shared with Student Leadership)</p> <p><b>6.e.</b> Improve ties with NEHS via local STD chapter collaboration and develop guidelines for coordinating with sister honor societies (shared with Student Leadership)</p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete implementation of the transition, training, and mentoring plans for newly elected Regents and future potential leaders developed in prior years, through planning and executing the Regents' Fall Retreat (in even years) and creating webinars aimed at developing Advisors' engagement with Board service (such as evaluator service, presentations, etc.) to identify future leaders. (Final tasks in completion of SP Objective 4.a. (mentoring of new leaders))</li> <li>In relation to SP Objective 4.c. (final tasks for completion) (and 4.b.), develop a resource bank of Advisors' expertise to use for events or other opportunities and (with Communications) develop possible webinars using Advisor expertise and/or for Advisor and other members' professional development.</li> <li>Discuss issues surrounding generative AI from a faculty perspective (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI in submissions, applications, and letters of recommendation are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of working toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> <li>In relation to SP Objective 1.e., consider ways to increase access to the Convention, if that is feasible (with Convention Committee).</li> <li>Promote local chapters, through use of social media platforms (and eventually new website); use events and awards for social media promotion; create a guide for chapters to use for social media promotion and to collaborate with local ELA, NEHS, and SKD chapters (in support of SP Objectives 5.c. and 6.e.)</li> <li>By December, finish review of induction ceremony models and materials, history of the society, and materials for Advisors in preparation for, or as those appear on, the updated website. Post updated materials that the current website will accommodate. Ensure the materials reflect our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning in January, work with Executive/Board Development Committee to recruit a) potential Board members, including potential SAs (before Convention), and b) committee members (through Convention) in respective regions.</li> <li>Work with Convention Chair and Convention Committee to plan workshops or other events for faculty Advisors at Convention—or external to Convention.</li> <li>Co-host the Advisor's Breakfast and the Hospitality Suite at Convention in coordination with the Past Presidents Advisory Council.</li> <li>By Convention, evaluate Board mentoring initiative and make additional recommendations if needed.</li> <li>By 2026 Convention, identify regional needs that could be met by alumni members, and share those needs with Alumni Leadership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Sonia Mae Brown, Amy Gates, (MaryClai Jones, fall sabbatical), Michaelann Nelson, Heidi Williams</p> <p><b>CO Liasons:</b> Namon Kent, Jeannine Szostak; <b>Sigma Kappa Delta:</b> Serena Richards</p>	



Scholarships and Academic Awards Committee–Co-Chairs: Amy Gates	
Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To recommend application requirements, selection standards, and objective evaluation methods for the annual scholarship competitions; to recommend scholarship recipients and identify runners-up.</li> <li>2. To review current scholarships and awards and make recommendations about creating or retiring awards.</li> <li>3. As necessary, coordinate with Service and Partnerships in the judging of applications for internships.</li> <li>4. To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In late summer, review the website materials on scholarships and awards for immediate revision and editing. Ensure that AwardSpring setup matches intended offerings and website lists and descriptions of awards.</li> <li>• Discuss issues surrounding generative AI in relation to awards/application materials (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI in submissions, applications, and letters of recommendation are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of contributing toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> <li>• By the Fall Board meeting, determine which scholarships and awards to continue, expand, or eliminate for the current year.</li> <li>• By the end of the year, review judging processes, including formal rubrics, and make changes as needed.</li> <li>• Using the agreed-upon fall award/scholarship timeline, judge award and scholarship applications and announce recipients.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the Spring Board meeting, continue review of which scholarships and awards to keep, expand, or eliminate.</li> <li>• In coordination with the Convention Committee, introduce Convention attendees to the work of this committee and encourage submission, as well as producing webinars or videos to recruit judges and to provide scholarship information to the membership at large.</li> <li>• Using the agreed-upon spring award/scholarship timeline, judge award and scholarship applications and recommend recipients.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Lexey Bartlett, Dr. Sonia Mae Brown, Felicia Steele  <b>Affiliate:</b> Carie King  <b>CO:</b> Jessica McCole</p>	

## Service Committee–Co-Chairs: Kevin Stemmler, Kelly Taylor

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To encourage and publicize service activities of chapters, particularly activities on literacy, broadly defined.</li> <li>2. To work toward an acceptance of service as a major component of the Sigma Tau Delta experience, and to work with the Convention Chair and Student Leadership to develop convention roundtable(s) on service.</li> <li>3. To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b>  <b>3.c.</b> <i>Support social justice efforts, both within and beyond the organization (with Partnerships)]</i></p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop resources to help chapters engage in service, such as ideas for service projects (including ways to connect with some of our larger partnerships or with local partners) and service ideas to support our mission and social justice.</li> <li>• Develop strategies to recognize and promote the local service chapters perform.</li> <li>• Consider increasing service and professional opportunities for Advisors and faculty members, including (in collaboration with the Regents and Communications Committees) possible presentation or publication opportunities, including webinars.</li> <li>• Promote Chapter Project Grants and Chapter Service Awards.</li> <li>• Promote service in connection with our Centennial year using the “100 for 100” concept.</li> <li>• Evaluate Chapter Project Grants (November deadline).</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and consider expanding the Chapter Service Project Award.</li> <li>• Using information gained through observations of chapters’ local service, develop resources for chapters to use that may reflect different kinds of service opportunities for different kinds of campuses and institutions.</li> <li>• Investigate the relationship between service and fundraising and consider creating resources for chapters that might need to raise funds in connection with a service project.</li> <li>• Evaluate Chapter Service Award (April 15 deadline).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Sonia Mae Brown, Felicia Steele  <b>Affiliates:</b> Carie King, Chris Lockwood, Tiffany Nolde  <b>CO Liaisons:</b> Jessica McCole, Katie Mudd  <b>SLs:</b> Zach Brady (FW SR), Emily Palmisano (MW ASR), Isaiah Russell (HP SR)</p>	





## Strategic Planning Committee–Chair: Leigh Dillard

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To evaluate existing Society programs and organization; to research new programs; to recommend Constitutional or By-Law revisions to the Board; to facilitate, upon Board approval, the implementation of committee recommendations.</li> <li>To ensure that met objectives are recorded and the Strategic Plan modified where committees and the Board see such a need.</li> <li>To plan and administer the Strategic Planning Retreat at appropriate intervals.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b>  <b>7.e.</b> <i>Measure the impact of services, activities, and experiences, including how to direct efforts, divert resources, and change outcomes based on value of experiences (including Convention, scholarships, internships, and workshops)</i></p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By Fall Board meeting, plan online strategic planning retreat for late fall 2024.</li> <li>Discuss strategies for fundraising, potentially with partners.</li> <li>In late Fall 2024, facilitate online strategic planning retreat.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through Summer 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By March, collate recommendations from the online strategic planning retreat into a new Strategic Plan for 2025-2030, incorporating any remaining objectives from the prior Strategic Plan as needed.</li> <li>By the Spring Board meeting, survey committees and task forces regarding progress towards the implementation of the previous Strategic Plan and potential revisions of objectives and deadlines based on feedback from chairs.</li> <li>By May, review reports from committees and task forces, recording progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan and, as needed, revising objectives based on feedback from chairs.</li> <li>In May and June, work with the President to develop the SP timeline and propose destinations (committee charges, etc.) for the first set of objectives for the 2025-2026 year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Members:</b> Lexey Barlett, Ami Comeford  <b>Affiliate:</b> Chris Lockwood  <b>CO:</b> Matt Hlinak, Jeannine Szostak  <b>Sigma Kappa Delta:</b> Joan Reeves, Leigh Ann Rhea</p>	



## Student Leadership Committee–Co-Chairs: Autumn Koors Foltz & Kelly Taylor

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide the students' voice within the Society.</li> <li>To serve as liaison between student membership and the Board, and to recruit and help train future student leaders.</li> <li>To promote and encourage local chapter activities.</li> <li>To encourage participation in state, regional, and international events.</li> <li>In consultation with the Regents, share best practices for Regional activities and advise the Board and Central Office on methods to recruit and re-activate local chapters.</li> <li>To assist the Convention Chair as needed up to and during Convention.</li> <li>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol> <p><b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>2.d.</b> <i>Revise job descriptions for Student Leadership, promoting opportunities in support of our mission and emphasizing professional development (shared with Regents)</i></p> <p><b>5.c.</b> <i>Encourage chapters to increase the society's visibility in their local areas (shared with Regents.)</i></p> <p><b>6.e.</b> <i>Improve ties with NEHS via local STD chapter collaboration and develop guidelines for coordinating with sister honor societies (shared with Regents)</i></p>	<p><b>Through Fall 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set goals for SL social media and other communication projects in cooperation with the CO, especially to promote local chapter activities and encourage participation (in support of SP Objective 5.c.)</li> <li>Promote local chapters, through use of social media platforms (and eventually new website); use events and awards for social media promotion; create a guide for chapters to use for social media promotion and to collaborate with local ELA, NEHS, and SKD chapters (in support of SP Objectives 5.c. and 6.e.)</li> <li>Develop plans for student-led projects to engage our membership at large, such as Society-wide or regional online book clubs (Common Reader or other), podcasts, informal video meetings/webinars for fun or professionalization/research sharing, or other ideas.</li> <li>By the Fall Board meeting, and in collaboration with the Convention Committee, develop plans for the 2025 Convention Student Leadership Workshop, Social Event, and Research in the Round, as well as potentially proposing additional sessions/panels to address interests of student members. Share these ideas in writing with the Convention Chair and Co-Chairs.</li> <li>Discuss issues surrounding generative AI from a student perspective (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI in submissions, applications, and letters of recommendation are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of working toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring through summer of 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By January, have drafted the land acknowledgement for Pittsburgh.</li> <li>With guidance from the CO and the Convention Chairs, assist at Convention by introducing or hosting speakers; organizing SL events for students; planning workshop(s) for student members; and volunteering at Convention registration or for other Convention-related tasks.</li> <li>In coordination with the Convention Committee, suggest 2026 Convention sessions/roundtables to address interests of key populations as identified by the Board.</li> <li>Review information about the recruitment, retention, and mentoring of student leadership in the SL manual, as well as revising job descriptions of Student Leadership with the aims from SP Objective 2.d.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CO:</b> Katie Mudd</p> <p><b>Executive Committee:</b> Kevin Stemmler</p> <p><b>SRs:</b> Zach Brady, Matthew Chinique, Crystal Dilling, Sophia Jockell, Jo Mahlum, Isaiah Russell</p> <p><b>ASRs:</b> Deanna Aniles, Arista Elderkin, Carmen Lok, Emily Palmisano, Loustella Perry, Kaylee Jo Stocks</p>	



### Alumni Advisory Council –Chairs: Tifanny Nodle

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide the alumni voice within the Society.</li> <li>2. To serve as liaisons between alumni membership and the Board through committee service, and to recruit and help train future Alumni Leaders.</li> <li>3. To promote and encourage alumni activities in support of the Society's mission and current student members, through local, regional, international, or online events and communications.</li> </ol> <p>To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Convention Chair and Convention Committee to plan workshops or other events (particularly career or service-oriented) by or for alumni at Convention—or external to Convention.</li> <li>• Work with other committees and alumni to identify strategies (and possibly projects) for alumni involvement at the local, Regional, and committee levels, especially for philanthropy for the English Honor Societies' current members or other organizations in alignment with our mission.</li> <li>• Discuss issues surrounding generative AI in relation to an alumni perspective (some resources to draw on can be found on the <a href="#">MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI</a> website). Topics related to the use of AI especially in terms of how our alumni encounter it in their careers are vital, but larger concerns related to our fields of education and work as writers and scholars can be included, with the possibility of contributing toward a Society protocol or position statement on the ethical use of AI.</li> <li>• Develop a draft handbook for future Alumni Leadership.</li> <li>• Before the Spring Board meeting and based on input from alumni, provide feedback and recommendations for alumni involvement to the Executive Committee.</li> <li>• Look at current Strategic Plan objectives where alumni may have particular insight or recommendations; communicate with the appropriate committee as they work toward these objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Affiliate:</b> Alexandra Gonzales <b>CO:</b> Katie Mudd, Jessica McCole <b>Non-Board:</b> To be discussed in consultation with the 2024-2025 President	

### Past Presidents Advisory Council–Chair: Shannin Shroeder (reports to Executive Committee)

Charge	Foci
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To serve in an advisory capacity at the request of the current Board President, Board of Directors, or Central Office.</li> <li>2. To contribute to information gathering for future Strategic Planning.</li> <li>3. To identify and help recruit new Board members and Board Affiliates.</li> <li>4. To determine and implement best practices with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consultation with the current President and Vice President, recruit Past Presidents to serve on current or future task forces or ad hoc committees.</li> <li>• Coordinate a meet-and-greet event for the 2025 Convention with the Regents and Convention Committees that targets chapter Advisors for Board recruitment, such as the Advisors' Breakfast or other similar events.</li> <li>• After the Spring Board meeting and based on input from Council members, provide feedback and recommendations to the Executive Committee.</li> <li>• Look at current Strategic Plan objectives where the Advisory Council may have particular insight, recommendations, or organizational “memory”; communicate with the appropriate committee as they work toward these objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Members:</b> Kevin Stemmler <b>Non-Board Members:</b> Other past Sigma Tau Delta presidents and Deltans who choose to participate	



Central Office (CO)–Executive Director: Matt Hlinak  
(Recommended for 2024-2025)

Charge	Foci
<b>Fall 2023-Sp 2024 SP Objectives:</b> <i>4 (b) Examine resources in place for Advisors, increase networking and provide a new societal website area dedicated to Advisors</i> <i>5 (b) Increase advocacy in and for the humanities, and especially for English-related disciplines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete work with Strategic Plan objectives handed over to CO by various committees, especially working to create an updated and robust redesigned website; this work should be closely supervised by the Executive Committee and the Communications Committee, in consultation with other committees.</li> <li>Work on promotion and advocacy for the humanities and English-related disciplines, including the role that the English Honor Societies can play for students, faculty, and campuses, and through work with partners to promote our disciplines and Societies.</li> <li>Complete the integration of Sigma Kappa Delta into the English Honor Societies.</li> <li>Make Board webpage a) available two months in advance of Board meetings and b) archivable in an easy-to-retrieve fashion—including retroactively. (Full setup of the Board Dashboard and Google Drive will be completed by the Executive Committee this fall and aid in these charges.)</li> <li>Continue work on hiring the Events Coordinator and a full-time office manager, and/or other help as needed, in order to reduce the CO workload to more sustainable levels.</li> <li>Begin planning for creating or combining systems for member databases to improve ease of use and consistency across the Societies.</li> </ul>
Input from various Committees	

Task Force Membership Initiatives–Chairs: Ami Comeford

Charge	Foci
<b>2024-2025 SP Objectives:</b> <b>2.b.</b> <i>Assess the informal Associate Membership category for eligible first-year students and consider applying that model to the international society</i> <b>2.c.</b> <i>Evaluate and expand benefits to virtual chapter members</i> <b>3.a.</b> <i>Seek ways to include diverse members, leaders, and Board members by looking at virtual chapters, HBCUs, and other areas with diverse membership</i> <b>6.c.</b> <i>Collaborate with NEHS and SKD to help their members transition to English-related majors at four-year institutions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete work with listed Strategic Plan objectives, with an eye toward task force recommendations and possible future charges for standing committees.</li> <li>Propose process for seamless transfer of membership from NEHS into SKD and from NEHS and/or SKD into STD.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Members:</b> Autumn Koors-Foltz, Kassia Krone, Shannin Schroeder, Heidi Williams <b>Affiliates:</b> Chris Lockwood, Tiffany Nolde <b>SLs:</b> Arista Elderkin (S ASR), Jo Mahlum (MW SR) <b>CO Liaison:</b> Jeannine Szostak <b>Sigma Kappa Delta:</b> Sheila Byrd	



## Spring Board Meeting



## Spring Board Meeting – [Sterling's Room](#)

### AGENDA

	<b>Call to Order</b>
	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>
	<b>Reminder of Board Meeting Guidelines:</b>  <b>Roberts Rules of Order and Special Rules:</b> See the Roberts Rules “cheat sheet” document <a href="#">here</a> . In addition, we use the following special rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussion of any individual item is limited to 10 minutes; if additional time is desired, a motion must be made to extend the discussion.</li> <li>○ Each person should be mindful of limiting comments to one per discussion in the interest of the time limit noted above; if the matter is urgent, additional comments may be made and/or a motion to extend the discussion period.</li> </ul>
	<b>Modification/Approval of Fall 2024 Board Meeting <a href="#">Minutes</a></b>
	<b>Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items, including Modification/Approval of Agenda</b>
	<b>Old Business</b> (reports of what has already been done). All reports are submitted in writing and are to have been read by all members before the meeting. During New Business, Board members (1) will be asked for any updates to their written reports on activities completed since the reports were submitted and (2) will themselves ask if others have any questions. Questions are welcomed from voting and non-voting board members.
	<b>New Business</b> (updates and motions)
1.	Central Office Reports & Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">Executive Director</a> (<b>Matt Hlinak</b>)</li> <li>b. <a href="#">NEHS Director</a> (<b>Chris Lockwood</b>)</li> <li>c. <a href="#">Director of Society Operations</a> (<b>Jeannine Szostak</b>)</li> <li>d. <a href="#">Director of Marketing and Communications</a> (<b>Katie Mudd</b>)</li> <li>e. <a href="#">Director of Technology</a> (<b>Namon Kent</b>)</li> <li>f. <a href="#">Program Coordinator</a> (<b>Jessica McCole</b>)</li> <li>g. <a href="#">Event Planner</a> (<b>Nicole Adams</b>)</li> <li>h. <a href="#">Sigma Kappa Delta Report</a> (<b>Sheila Byrd</b>)</li> </ul>
2.	Board Members' Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <a href="#">Immediate Past President</a> (<b>Shannin Schroeder</b>)</li> <li>ii. <a href="#">President</a> (<b>Lexey Bartlett</b>)</li> <li>iii. <a href="#">Vice President</a> (<b>Leigh Dillard</b>)</li> <li>iv. <a href="#">Secretary/Treasurer</a> (<b>Ami Comeford</b>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>





		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. <a href="#">Officer at Large</a> (<b>Kevin Stemmler</b>)</li> <li>b. Regents, Student Representatives &amp; Associate Student Representatives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <a href="#">Eastern</a> (<b>Felicia Steele, Matthew Chinique &amp; Lucy Perry</b>)</li> <li>ii. <a href="#">Far Western</a> (<b>Michaelann Nelson, Zach Brady &amp; Kaylee Jo Stocks</b>)</li> <li>iii. <a href="#">High Plains</a> (<b>Kassia Krone &amp; Isaiah Russell</b>)</li> <li>iv. <a href="#">Midwestern</a> (<b>Amy Gates, Jo Mahlum &amp; Emily Palmisano</b>)</li> <li>v. <a href="#">Southern</a> (<b>Heidie Williams, Sophia Jockell, &amp; Arista Elderkin</b>)</li> <li>vi. <a href="#">Southwestern</a> (<b>Dr. Sonia Mae Brown, Carmen Lok, &amp; Cyrah Johnson</b>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Student Advisors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <a href="#">Senior</a> (<b>Autumn Koors Foltz</b>)</li> <li>ii. <a href="#">Junior</a> (<b>Kelly Taylor</b>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. <a href="#">Alumni Representative</a> (<b>Tiffany Nolde &amp; William Saccavino</b>)</li> <li>e. <a href="#">Editor of Publications</a> (<b>Carie King</b>)</li> </ul>
	3.	<p>Committee Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">Communications Committee</a> (<b>Kassia Krone &amp; Carie King</b>)</li> <li>b. <a href="#">Convention Committee</a> (<b>Leigh Dillard, Shannin Schroeder, &amp; Kevin Stemmler</b>)</li> <li>c. <a href="#">Executive Committee</a> (<b>Lexey Bartlett</b>)</li> <li>d. Partnerships Committee (<b>Felicia Steele</b>)</li> <li>e. <a href="#">Regents Committee</a> (<b>Kassia Krone &amp; Felicia Steele</b>)</li> <li>f. <a href="#">Scholarships &amp; Academic Awards Committee</a> (<b>Amy Gates</b>)</li> <li>g. <a href="#">Service Committee</a> (<b>Kevin Stemmler &amp; Kelly Taylor</b>)</li> <li>h. <a href="#">Strategic Planning Committee</a> (<b>Leigh Dillard</b>)</li> <li>i. <a href="#">Student Leadership Committee</a> (<b>Autumn Koors Foltz &amp; Kelly Taylor</b>)</li> </ul>
	4.	<p>Advisory Council / Task Force Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">Alumni Advisory Council</a> (<b>Tiffany Nolde</b>)</li> <li>b. <a href="#">Past President's Advisory Council</a> (<b>Shannin Schroeder</b>)</li> <li>c. <a href="#">Membership Initiatives Task Force</a> (<b>Ami Comeford</b>)</li> <li>d. Sigma Kappa Delta advisory Council (<b>Joan Reeves</b>)</li> </ul>
	5.	<a href="#">Budget Report and Proposed 2025-2026 Budget Review</a> ( <b>Matt Hlinak</b> )
		<b>Other New Business</b> (outstanding societal issues not in reports)
		<p><b>Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Conferences, Publications, Contests, and Events</li> <li>• Kudos</li> </ul>

	<b>Reminders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reimbursement forms and required receipts (in accordance with the travel policy) should be submitted to Nicole Adams no later than <b>Friday, April 4.</b></li> <li>• Committee minutes should be sent to Jeannine Szostak and Lexey Bartlett no later than <b>Friday, April 4.</b></li> </ul>
	<b>Adjournment</b>







## Spring 2024 Board Meeting Minutes



**Note: Motions are highlighted in yellow.**

### SIGMA TAU DELTA, FALL 2024 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Those in attendance:** Kevin, Shannin, Lexey, Leigh, Chris, Ami, Crystal, Mae, Sophia, Heidi, Jo, Amy, Isaiah, Kassia, Zach, Michaelann, Matthew, Felicia, Leighann, Joan, Kelly, Autumn, Tiffany, Sheila, Nicole, Jessica, Namon, Katie, Chris, Matt

- Call to Order (Wi-Fi Network: Wyndham\_Meetings/ Password: Sigma24)
  - Meeting called to order by Lexey at 3:08 pm.
- Welcome & Introductions: What is everyone reading?
- Reminder of Board Meeting Guidelines: Lexey provided an explanation of the rules and why this is important as to why these rules are crucial to the meeting running efficiently.
  - Robert's Rules of Order and Special Rules: See the Roberts Rules "cheat sheet" document here. In addition, we use the following special rules:
    - Discussion of any individual item is limited to 10 minutes; if additional time is desired, a motion must be made to extend the discussion.
    - Each person should be mindful of limiting comments to one per discussion in the interest of the time limit noted above; if the matter is urgent, additional comments may be made and/or a motion to extend the discussion period.
- Modification/Approval of Spring 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
  - Motion for approval by Leigh
  - Seconded by Shannin
  - Vote: Unanimous approval
- Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items (proposed emendations to agenda)
  - Shannon moved to move Exec. Comm report to the beginning of the committee reports
    - Seconded by Leigh
    - Vote: Unanimously approved
- Old Business (reports of what has already been done). All reports are submitted in writing and are to have been read by all members before the meeting. During New Business, Board members (1) will be asked for any updates to their written reports on activities completed since the reports were submitted and (2) will themselves ask if others have any questions. Questions are welcomed from voting and non-voting board members.

#### 1. Central Office Reports & Updates

##### a. Executive Director (Matt Hlinak)

- No updates
- No questions

##### b. Director of Society Operations (Jeannine Szostak)



- No updates
  - Question: related to the EIN availability. What does that decision mean for not continuing to let chapters use this number? What should chapters do moving forward to have a bank account that is not associated with the university but also not under the adviser's name? Don't want chapter advisers to use their own names.
  - Question: What should chapters do that already have this number in use?
    - No reason to shut the account if it has been responsibly used. The society doesn't know how many are actually using this number. Chapters can change their accounts over or get a bank account under their state laws as an organization. The CO can help with this.
      - The CO will come up with directional language to help advisers know how to set up these accounts.
  - Question: Shannin will follow-up with her questions in person.
- c. NEHS Director (Chris Lockwood)
- No updates
  - Questions:
    - Technical correction to spell "Dennis" correctly.
- d. Director of Marketing and Communications (Katie Mudd)
- No updates
  - Question: (Felicia) Is gmerch allowing increased revenue?
    - The amount of revenue through direct marketing has led to an immediate increase in sales. Hoping to see even more activity now that chapters are back in session.
    - Gmerch maintains the confidentiality of members through their marketing.
  - Has Gmerch agreed to keep us updated as to how much money is being donated to the Trevor Project?
    - Gmerch doesn't do that directly. We make that donation based on the revenue that comes in and Gmerch sends a report of how much revenue was taken in and is kept track of by our accountant and is processed through the CO. At this point, one donation has been paid.
- e. Director of Technology (Namon Kent)
- No updates
  - No questions
  - Noted appreciation for the comment about the importance of communication in the report.
- f. Program Coordinator (Jessica McCole)
- No updates
  - Comment (Shannin): "Trial by fire" in having to start off the position working inside of the AwardsSpring problems. Public kudos for that work.
- g. Event Planner (Nicole Adams)
- No updates
  - Questions: (Felicia) clarification of the project management system mentioned in the report.
- h. Sigma Kappa Delta Report (Sheila Byrd)
- No updates
  - No questions



## 2. Board Members' Reports

### a. Officers

#### i. Immediate Past President (Shannin Schroeder)

- Updates: Invited to read for the Penguin internships and had a great experience with it.
- No questions.

#### ii. President (Lexey Bartlett)

- No updates
- Questions: (Shannin) The Maps Leadership, what is the take-away for bringing something back
  - Advocacy for the humanities
  - AI–All of our committees have AI as part of their charges, as it's an issue we all need to be working with and thinking about.
  - Attended a workshop on strategic planning that could be useful for our own strategic planning activities.

#### iii. Vice President (Leigh Dillard)

- Updates: Provided additional information about the Dashboard proposal.
  - Shift responsibility for minutes and archiving to the committee chairs and not the CO.
  - All committee chairs will get a link post-meeting as well as a brief video instruction on how to use it. Will also provide a Zoom instructional meeting for folks to have a hands-on experience on using this system and how to upload the documents.
  - Point is to create an accessible system where everyone has access to all documents.
- Updates: updated the bylaws and distributed that document to the Regents and applicable chairs. The clean document will be a PDF rather than an HTML document for the website.

#### iv. Secretary (Ami Comeford)

- No updates
- No questions

#### v. Officer at Large (Kevin Stemmler)

- No updates
- No questions

### b. Regents & Student Representatives

#### i. Eastern (Felicia Steele & Matthew Chinique)

- Updates: Scoring for Norton and Penguin internships has been completed and the interns have been chosen; met with Janine to formulate the MOU about what the partnership will look like.
- Questions: (Mae) Would like more information about the “institutional austerity”?
  - When individuals were asked about helping to evaluate internship applications, faculty are responding that they can't, as they have to pick up more classes. Faculty travel

budgets are cut. Student travel is being cut. Morale is a problem, as faculty are under more and more pressure on students and the administrative work of Sigma TD chapters is being put more and more on professional staff. Has ramifications for faculty being able to review applications and volunteer for work.

ii. Far Western (Michaelann Nelson & Zach Brady)

- Updates: Fleshing out ideas for a regional publication.
- No Questions

iii. High Plains (Kassia Krone & Isaiah Russell)

- Updates: Regional conference date has moved to happen before the Convention submission deadline. Haven't seen as many submissions, so that deadline might need to be moved to a bit later. Reminder to have students in any region to submit work. Sept 27th is the current deadline, but less than 10 submissions so far. May extend for a couple of days.

iv. Midwestern (Amy Gates & Jo Mahlum)

- No Updates
- Public kudos on the scholarship work over the summer. (Shannin and Lexey)

v. Southern (Heidi Williams & Sophia Jockell)

- Updates: 1) Met with SR to discussion vision and goals, including compiling a handbook that will explain service and other opportunities to share with the region. Reminder to submit to the regional conference.
- Public kudos on seeing the types of e-mails that were sent out to the region that were included in the report. (Mae)

vi. Southwestern (Dr. Sonia Mae Brown & Crystal Dilling)

- Updates: All concerns and questions were answered in an efficient and organized way, including where to find board documents and budget to prepare for the meeting.

c. Student Advisors

i. Senior (Autumn Koors Foltz)

- Updates: Student leadership newsletter (substack) is a bit stalled until working out some technical issues; probably will be re-activating current chapter location of Colorado State.

ii. Junior (Kelly Taylor)

- Updates: Change to the book club kits, but this will be further addressed in the student leadership committee discussion.

d. Alumni Representative (Tiffany Nolde)

- Updates: The bylaws need to be changed to reflect that we have not just one alumni rep but we have two.

e. Editor of Publications (Carie King)

- No Updates



- Questions should be directed to Carie directly via e-mail.

### 3. Committee Reports

#### a. Communications Committee (Kassia Krone & Carie King)

- Carie and Kassia met together and then with the committee to go over goals.
- Meetings this week
  - How to tackle the website updates: committee will do the bulk of that work, though it is listed in different committees. Namon is constructing the site map. Once that is finished, the committee will divvy that out and look over it and then they will delegate assignments to other individuals and committees.
  - Student leaders provided input that AI isn't necessarily as valuable to our organization, as it is product based and not process based. We should define AI on our terms and what we consider to be AI use. Students do not feel comfortable opening up convention submission to AI generated content.
  - No longer going to use the Facebook Regional pages. Will be moving energy over to Instagram. Maintain the main Facebook page but will phase out the regional FB page. Also keeping Humans of Sigma TD.
- Questions: (Shannin), Do we want to go back and capture some of the positive comments and archive them as well as regional events?
  - Yes, that will and can be done.

#### b. Convention Committee (Leigh Dillard, Shannin Schroeder, & Kevin Stemmler)

- The Convention Committee moves to create a set of Convention Travel Support Grants, awarding up to \$1500 to students presenting at Convention. For the 2025 Convention support, we would like to request a new budget line for these grants in the initial amount of \$7500, equal to 5 awards up to \$1500 each.
  - Discussion: Could help up to 4 students from a chapter, since the hotel room would be covered by this amount and more students could therefore come to populate this room.
  - Would be handled by Convention and not Scholarships Committee.
  - Would not be by region but rather by lottery and open to students eligible for Pell Grants.
  - Will continue to raise money for this project with outside entities and sponsors, and those might be more specific depending on the organization.
  - What limitations could be put on to promote applications from schools that don't already fund students to go to Convention?
    - One of the checklist items will be, "Are you Pell Grant eligible and interested"?
    - This decision will be left to the individual students to make this decision and follow the directions of the checklist.
  - Vote: Unanimously approved



- Updates:
  - Got updates from student leadership (including book club kits).
  - Programming: ideas about conversations they would like to see whether those are roundtable ideas or sessions that regents or committee chairs would like to see happen.
  - Professional development sessions in two blocks. Thinking about alumni who will be presenting on professional development for anyone. Also presenting alumni FOR alumni and advisers.
  - Process of proposing and leading roundtables. What does a good conversation feel like in those roundtables. Also promoting multi-chapter roundtables.
  - Namon and Shannin have been working on the submission site to address the new travel grants and will ask folks to help test that.

c. Executive Committee (Lexey Bartlett)

- Explanation of how constitutional changes are made and ratified and the difference between bylaws that don't have to be ratified.
- Motions 1-5 were put forward as a group and will be voted on by one single vote with discussion happening on each motion individually.
  - All motions pass unanimously.
- The following motions were put forward for a board vote.
  - MOTION 1. We remind the Board that we approved a motion at the Fall 2022 Board meeting to amend Article I, Section VI. Nondiscrimination. to be in compliance with federal law. The change we will add to the ballot will read: "Sigma Tau Delta does not discriminate on the basis of disability, age, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, geographic location, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, religion, and/or sexual orientation." [Change from original text, which reads: "Section VI. Nondiscrimination. Sigma Tau Delta does not discriminate on the basis of disability, age, color, gender, national origin, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation."]  
 ■ Already approved and just needs to be sent out for ratification.
  - MOTION 2. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Article I, Section V. Sponsorship, to read: "The Society shall sponsor Sigma Kappa Delta (SKD) for two-year colleges, the National English Honor Society (NEHS) for high schools, and the English Language Arts Honor Society (ELA) for middle grades. Collectively, Sigma Tau Delta, Sigma Kappa Delta, National English Honor Society, and English Language Arts Honor Society shall be the English Honor Societies." [Change from original text, which reads: "Section V. Sponsorship. The Society shall sponsor the National English Honor Society (NEHS) for secondary students and teachers."]  
 ■ This will not change the banking numbers and accounting that will be under the same umbrella that Sigma Tau Delta already is.
  - MOTION 3. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section I. Funds and Investments. A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds, to read: "Section I. Funds and Investments. A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds. Any funds received in the name of the Society shall be promptly deposited into an appropriate Society account." [change in

bold, from original text, which reads: “A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds. Upon receipt of any funds from any source in the name of the Society, a Board member, or the Executive Director as authorized by the Board, shall immediately direct said funds into an appropriate Society account.”]

- MOTION 4. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section I. Funds and Investments. B. Investments, to read: B. Investments. The Board shall determine specific policies that govern the purchase and sale of investments not otherwise specified in this article of the Constitution. [change in bold from original text, which reads: “B. Investments. The Board will formulate and approve specific policies that govern the purchase and sale of investments not otherwise specified in this article of the Constitution.”] 1. Purchase of Investments Instruments. Unencumbered funds in the checking and savings accounts of the Society shall be invested from time to time by the Secretary/Treasurer as authorized by the Executive Committee. Such investments shall be made with due regard to the proper diversification and safety of principal and shall be maintained in the manner that a reasonably prudent investor would maintain their own portfolio. [change is simply omitting the word and phrase marked by the strikethrough and making the word Investment plural] 2. Sale of Investments. In accordance with specific policy approved by the Board, investments shall be sold, exchanged, or redeemed and proceeds promptly deposited as provided above (Section I.A, this Article). [change from original text, which reads: 2. Sale of Investments. The Secretary/Treasurer shall, in accordance with specific policy approved by the Board and in place at the time, sell, exchange, or redeem investment instruments owned by the Society and promptly deposit the proceeds as provided above (Section I.A, this Article).]

- The secretary role has already been changed functionally, so the constitution is here being updated to reflect that change that is already occurring on a practical level.

- MOTION 5. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section II. Operating Expenses. C, to read: Section II. Operating Expenses. C. The Executive Director shall be responsible for executing the approved Budget and shall report expenditures regularly to the Board. [change from original text, which reads: “Section II. Operating Expenses. C. The Secretary/Treasurer, along with the Executive Director, shall be responsible for execution of the approved Budget and shall report to the Board.”] ITEM 6. We also plan to remove incorrect hyphens, but these are editorial changes that we do not need a Society-wide vote on (incorrect hyphens to fix in II.I.A.1: federally insured, instead of federally-insured, and federally guaranteed instead of federally-guaranteed). I would also propose changing which to that in the phrase “federally-insured financial institutions that which shall have a capital surplus and undivided profits of not less than \$100,000.00.”

- Motion: Having received the approval of Sigma Kappa Delta’s current board of directors and executive director Sheila Byrd, the Executive Committee moves that Sigma Kappa Delta’s board of directors shall become an advisory council, reporting to Matt Hlinak as Executive Director.

- Discussion



- Sigma KD merger into Sigma TD
  - Working the past 18 months on this integration. Find ways to serve the SKD students in the best way possible through this integration. Most logical way to do this is to treat SKD chapters the same as STD chapters by utilizing Write Away, and other STD systems in terms of management. Also move them into our scholarship management system and thinking additional about scholarships that would apply to SKD student members.
  - Has met with the SKD leadership in an expedited way.
  - SKD has always been part, and is, therefore, a more lateral move as a sister organization (Shannin)
  - The SKD board has approved this integration.
- Point of information: This is a new motion that had not previously been sent out.
- SKD Leadership: more questions will probably come that will need to be worked out to help.
- Public kudos to Sheila for her leadership. This will be Sheila's 45th year of being involved with Sigma TD or SKD.
- Working with SKD more closely will strengthen both organizations (Lexey, Shannin)
- This is not a constitutional motion, so it will not need to be ratified.
- Yea, Nay, Abstention: Vote called by Lexey. Motion passes unanimously.
- Regent-at-Large: Other committees have also suggested this would be a good idea. Working with other committees, a motion should be ready to come forward in the Spring.
  - Work with displaced members without chapters; virtual chapters; international chapters.
  - Allows regents to begin thinking about what this might look like and how to recruit and think about the cycle so that this regent could join at the 2026 Convention and be onboarded in the Fall 2026 at the next Regents retreat.
  - Would also be good to add a student leader from one of those virtual and international chapters at the same time as a new regent.
  - Should be aware of some of the complications in recruiting faculty for the international chapters and virtual chapters, as these advising positions are often being put on professional staff.
  - What constitutes a virtual chapter? Those that do not have a physical, brick-and-mortar presence.

#### d. Partnerships Committee (Felicia Steele)

- Updates
  - Agreed it would be a good idea to model how local chapters can partner with their own local organizations.
  - Have two roundtables worth of material that could be good for Convention.
  - Looking at creating more regional partnerships.
  - Try to revise AwardSpring to emphasize Sigma TD skills and service on applications.





- Questions: Partnership with Lambda. How would it work for students to attend their convention upon winning the award? The 12 winners are eligible and the faculty at the retreat will choose who the winner of those applications will be and then they will be fully funded to attend the retreat.
- Kudos to Felicia (Kevin) for wading through and working through the applications and working with the evaluators.
- We need to do a better job of expanding the options of where and how students and their applications are appealing to what Penguin wants—they want people to do more than work in editing.

e. Regents Committee (Kassia Krone & Felicia Steele)

- Updates
  - Getting acquainted with new regents and explaining what those tasks would be and how the committees work and what they do.
  - Focus also on the website and what the regents would like to see. Discussion with Namon about specific Regents pages. Notified the Communications Committee, which led to a more refined process for how website revisions would take place.
  - What is the Regents' interface and relationship with the different stakeholders in the organization? Wanted to stay way from the word internship for student leaders but wanted to also think about academic credit for those student leaders.
    - Discussion: Southwest PCA has a model that might work here with the way they utilize fellows (Lexey). Could add a name or titles to their roles, e.g. executive student board (Heidi)
  - How to differentiate between the needs of different regions and types of schools and what that might require from student leadership in how they fulfill their role given those differences.

f. Scholarships & Academic Awards Committee (Amy Gates)

- Updates
  - Strategies and timing for recruiting evaluators, which continues to be a challenge.
  - Planning a roundtable for Convention that will complement professional partnerships and development.
  - Need to update information and rubrics in AwardSpring to be aligning submissions with what evaluators are looking for in submissions.
  - Jessica may ask some of us to be practice evaluators to test the system and submission changes.
  - Public kudos to those who have helped to evaluate, especially under pressured circumstances.

g. Service Committee (Kevin Stemmler & Kelly Taylor)

- Updates
  - Working to get the book clubs running.
  - Project service grants: though about dates and will focus on getting those ready to go. It has already been built in.
  - Would like to put a motion together
  - Shannin moved to let this committee bring back a motion tomorrow to change their budget request for project grants.

- Second from Kassia
- Unanimously approved.
- Lambda will reserve 15 spots for Sigma TD judges and agree to donate their honorarium to the organization to then use that money for the related awards.
  - Further details will be in the email sent out and the links contained there for individuals who are interested in judging.
- **Motion: “The Service Committee requests a \$6000 budget line for Service inspired Book Club Projects and awards.”**
  - Questions: (Leigh) Is this a new addition to what is already there?
    - Yes, this is a new project.
  - Question: (Lexey) Is this a certain number of awards or how much per award?
    - Might be a certain amount per region. Student leadership is still working on it. HOW the money is distributed might change depending on how this goes forward in terms of awards.
  - Question: Is this in the service award category? How the service award is written, it defined specifics of how that money would be awarded, so this wouldn't fit really well.
    - This is a new award and will have different guidelines on how this would go forward.
  - Comment: could this be brought back as an amended motion with more detail. More discussion about further details about how this is going to go forward.
  - Suggestion: Which model is being aimed at in terms of this award? This needs to be clarified to answer the question.
  - Move to table the vote to help revise the motion for clarity (Leigh); seconded by Michaelann. Yay (unanimously approved)
  - **Original motion untabled and withdrawn. Moved: Felicia Seconded: Leigh**
    - **Permission to withdraw the original motion (Kelly).**
  - **New motion proposed by the committee:**
    - **Based on the established model of the Common Reader Award, the Service Committee requests funding for up to twenty Book Club Service awards of \$200 each for service projects inspired by chosen Book Club titles and their corresponding Book Club kits. These awards will be distributed after service projects have been completed by chapters. Chapters can be funded for one project within the award period. This would necessitate a new \$4000 budget line.**
      - Questions
        - Who will handle the evaluations? (Amy)
          - The service committee rather than the Regents, even though it is being modeled after awards judged by Regents.
        - What will the award be called? (Matt)
          - Book Club Service Award



- Votes: Motion carries with all board members approving and two abstentions from the student leaders.

#### h. Strategic Planning Committee (Leigh Dillard)

- Updates
  - Appreciate the potential growth with the integration of SKD.
  - What can we do to help NEHS with getting information about our contacts with schools to Chris rather than him trying to track them down. We can help with this pathways beginning with ELA and up through each organization.
  - The committee would like to work toward creating a sustainable chapter development plan. How are we supporting chapters at all levels and different situations (virtual, schools that have lost chapters, etc.)?
  - Strategic planning repeat will happen in early December and the plan is to have small virtual meetings to discuss goals and plans.
  - The new plan will reflect new challenges and also any carry-over challenges from the previous one.

**Motion to Adjourn at 6:07 pm. (Leigh); seconded by Shroeder/Stemmler**

#### i. Student Leadership Committee (Autumn Koors Foltz & Kelly Taylor)

- AI Usage: While this can be used in a variety of ways, Sigma TD is not one of those places. The principles of the society do not align with the use of generative AI.
- Student adviser bylaws need to be revised to reflect the in-practice system.
- Book Club Kits: These are activities that give chapters ideas on service. Each kit is a different book that helps the chapters to host their own book clubs. These are interactive for chapters and provide ideas for service related to those books.f
  - Would be good to release the actual book titles ASAP so that chapters can prep for this.
  - Additional clarifying questions asked by board members.

### 4. Advisory Council / Task Force Reports

#### a. Alumni Advisory Council (Tiffany Nolde)

- Alumni rep will be taking over the process of posting on the Discord channel.
- Will begin meeting on a more regular basis.

#### b. Past President's Advisory Council (Shannin Schroeder)

- Made plans to continue to invite past presidents and Delta winners to Convention and to a luncheon to use as a business meeting as a way to keep folks active and connected to the organization.

- Would like to work more directly with the alumni to create a faculty aspect of alumni for former advisers, board members, etc. if they make professional changes where they are no longer attached to a chapter.

c. Membership Initiatives Task Force (Ami Comeford) (new; no report)

## 5. 2025 Proposed Budget Review & Investment Update (Matt Hlinak)

- The additional \$4,000 is not showing up, but it doesn't impact the overall budget that we need to vote on and approve. This is a technical difficulty that will be remedied in the budget when this technical difficulty can be resolved back at the CO.
- This budget is better at having broken down the expenses of ELA and NEHS.
- The groupings that have been requested to be broken out have been to help keep track of awards and where the money is going for each of those awards.
- Investment income has been good over the past few years.
  - Questions
    - Regent expenses—the Regent's budget of \$2,000 is not represented in that number if it is a proposed rather than actual.
    - Could we have a break-down of award, specifically for the internship and journal awards, since the internship stipend specifically is variable, and the number that the committee can award is based on that line item number? The more detailed spreadsheet can be made available to board members. In future, both the collapsed and detailed versions will be sent out.
    - What is the publication line item covering? These items are further broken down into three areas, most of which are stipends for reviewers.
    - The estimated number of new memberships for NEHS are too large and need to be adjusted, as does the number reflecting merchandise sale.
    - The board needs to see the budget numbers in relation to last year's actuals.
      - This was shared with the EC.
    - Concern expressed that the board can't do its due diligence with regard to the financial matters if the discussion has to be continually deferred away from the meeting.
      - A Zoom session will be set up to go through the budget and vote, which will allow for additional questions.
  - Further budget questions can be posed when the proposed budget is presented and sent out to the board for an electronic vote.
  - The EC will work on the process issues to be sure that all committees and board members can feel confident about budget requests and give the CO time to incorporate those requests.
- Other New Business (outstanding societal issues not in reports)
  - No new business
- Announcements
  - Various kudos given to board members on accomplishments.
  - Reminder about cultural and historical events and places in Pittsburgh.
  - Deadline reminders for various conferences, contests, webinars.



- Reminders
  - Reimbursement forms and required receipts (in accordance with the travel policy) should be submitted to Jeannine Szostak no later than Friday, October 4.
  - Committee minutes should be sent to Jeannine Szostak and Lexey Bartlett no later than Friday, October 4.

Adjournment: Motion by Leigh   Seconded by Kevin   Adjourned at 10:2



## Central Office

Executive Director—Matt Hlinak

**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Executive Director

**Name:** Matt Hlinak

Since January, integrating Sigma Kappa Delta into English Honor Societies has taken up a significant amount of my time. I have learned how to use their database, which has given me a newfound appreciation for Write Away. With the help of Luke Bailey in the NIU IT department, we will be transitioning SKD chapters into Write Away shortly, and I'm looking forward to no longer needing to manually upload batches of 3,000 prospective members.

Marge Clements has shown tremendous initiative in sorting out SKD's finances, processing merger paperwork, and in helping me enroll new students. There has been a hefty backlog of chapters who enrolled students in the fall or even earlier who are still waiting on certificates. This necessitated an immediate transition to digital certificates. Special thanks to Dawn Jamrog for getting these out, typically within 15 minutes of being asked.

Despite these challenges, I have greatly enjoyed getting to interact with SKD advisors and students. I particularly appreciate the guidance and support from their Advisory Council—Joan Reeves, Leigh Ann Rhea, Bradley Sides, Donna Newsome and Serena Richards. I also want to thank Sheila Byrd and Thalia Love for their leadership and dedication to the Society. I am truly excited about SKD's potential for growth, and none of this would be possible without the foundation they have built.

On to financial matters, we are also changing our fiscal year to align with the academic calendar at NIU and our other member institutions. The primary driver of this change is to allow us to factor NIU's automatic raises into our budgeting process. This also allows us to undergo our annual audits at a time when our audit firm is less busy and more able to focus on us. Unfortunately, changing calendars requires us to speed up the budgeting process, which partly explains my voluminous budget report for this meeting.

Looking ahead to future conventions, I am trying a different approach for requesting proposals from hotels. In the past, we have chosen a couple of cities and reached out to their convention bureaus, which hasn't generated a lot of proposals. This year, I contacted all the major hotel chains and asked them to send me proposals for broad regions—the Southwest for 2027 and the Midwest for 2028. So far, I've received proposals from hotels in Dallas and Orange County for '27 and Chicago, Columbus, and Minneapolis for '28 (Indianapolis and Milwaukee have also expressed interest). I'll also reach out to convention bureaus in cities we've visited before, like Albuquerque, Cincinnati, Corpus Christi, and Kansas City. If we do a site visit in your area, I hope you'll be willing to help tour hotels, as Kevin Stemmler and Leigh Dillard did in the past couple of years.

I should note that I received feedback from multiple hotels that our food and beverage budget is too small—by a factor of 10!—for a group of our size, which likely explains the poor reception to our previous requests for proposals. We may need to be more open to convention centers and hotels that are outside of the downtown area, provided we still have easy access (perhaps through public transportation) to cultural activities.

Finally, I'm happy to announce that Arshiya Bhasin has joined the team as a graduate assistant. Arshiya is an engineer pursuing her master of science in management information systems at NIU. She reports to Namon Kent and has already been a great help in managing our many technical systems.

#### **Additional Activities:**

I attended the Association for Collegiate Honor Societies annual conference in early February. Given all the work with SKD integration and Convention preparation, the timing of the conference was not ideal, but it was good to network with colleagues and get to know more about the other honor societies. I learned that we seem to be the only society that puts on a huge annual conference (I detected a hint of awe when I described Convention), and also that most honor societies have a stronger connection to their disciplinary organization. I'm glad that Janine Utell from MLA is here, which I hope will strengthen the bonds between our organizations and generate more opportunities for collaboration.

I also remain a member of the board of directors of Alpha Sigma Lambda, the honor society for adult learners. ASL is housed on the campus of Eastern Illinois University, home to the Upsilon Gamma chapter, and an institution that, like so many of our member institutions, is facing fiscal challenges that might make them unable to continue hosting ASL. This is truly a difficult moment for higher education.

#### **Concerns:**

My primary concern is financial, although I'll allow my budget report to speak to that concern. Suffice to say, I am concerned about the effect of the broader economic climate on our investment account, as well as the declining institutional support provided to our member institutions.

A recurring concern since I started has been the enormous effort required to put on Convention and its impact on staff morale. Namon, Jeannine Szostak, Katie Mudd, Chris Lockwood, and Nicole Adams have all been putting in significant night and weekend hours to get us over the finish line—as have Leigh, Kevin, and Shannin Schroeder in their uncompensated roles as Convention Chairs. I have personally put in multiple 15-hour days this week, and that's on the light end compared to my colleagues. I'm expecting a wonderful Convention due to the tireless efforts of the staff and Chairs but worry about our ability to go through this every year. We need to restructure the Convention preparation process to spread the workload out over the course of the year to avoid this annual January-March crunch. We have sufficient personnel as long as we can take better advantage of the quiet summer months.

On a personal note, my wife just completed her second round of chemotherapy and is doing well. I have been accompanying her to treatments every other Tuesday, which has certainly disrupted my work schedule. Fortunately, she will be switching to oral medication with fewer side effects and fewer doctor visits. I am so grateful to the CO staff and Board members who have picked up the slack when I've been distracted. I am looking forward to getting back to a normal schedule in the coming months.

Finally, please send your love and support to Executive Director *Emeritus* Bil Johnson, who is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer. He has lost some hair and some weight but not his smile or wit. He is doing well, and his doctor has told him "this is not what's going to kill you." He regrets missing his first Convention in more than four decades but promises to be back calling roll at the business meeting with his usual panache next year.







## Director of NEHS Director—Chris Lockwood



### **Board Report, Spring, 2025** (September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Director of the National English Honor Society (grades 9-12) & English Language Arts Honor Society (grades 6-9)

**Name:** Christopher Lockwood (ctlockwood@niu.edu)

The period September 2024 to March 2025 has provided the Central Office, Advisory Council, and I the opportunity to continue making small, but significant, changes to processes and additions to programming, and to further witness the enthusiasm of Chapter Advisor teachers and students from across the nation and around the world for both the National English Honor Society and the ELA Honor Society.

NEHS and ELA Honor Society success is due, in no small measure, to the staff at the Central Office. Big thanks to Katie and Namon for all their help with webinars, society communications and running the website, their enthusiasm for my ideas for new projects, and their support for the bigger picture work they both collaborate on with me (including marketing and outreach strategies) – as well as for their patience, support, good ideas, feedback, and friendship. Dawn has, as always gone above and beyond, to ensure that new charters are processed quickly, that student certificates are mailed out, that every Chapter Advisor with a question gets a quick and complete response, and in a million other ways. Jessica has continued to work with social media and AwardSpring; thank you. Marge and Nicole have been great additions to the team, and it has been great to collaborate with them: They have provided unending support with awards mailings, finances, and NEHS convention-related issues. At the whole-organization level, Matt and Jeannine have continued to be wonderful listeners and huge supporters of both ELA and NEHS: Thank you both SO much!

#### NEHS outreach and growth:

NEHS has seen 71 new chapters successfully chartered in the period September 2024 – March 2025 and 25 since January 1, 2025. The period January – December 2024 saw 117 new chapters successfully chartered into NEHS. NEHS now has chapters [across the US and in the following countries](#): American Samoa, Armenia, Bahrain, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte D'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Guam, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Rwanda, Singapore, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Turkey, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

In the period March 2024 - March 2025, NEHS enrolled 32,460 new student members. This is a marked increase on the 32,528 (March 2023-March 2024) and 27,000 or so (March 2022 – March 2023). This year's Board Report has been written slightly earlier than last year's so we are on target to meet or go beyond the 2023-2024 total for new student members. We currently have 1269 active chapters.

We can now, confidently, say that NEHS is the world's largest subject-specific high school (grades 9-12) honor society!

We have seen a run on previous inactive and suspended chapters reaffiliating with NEHS in the first few months of 2025. Dawn and I undertook a process of reaching out to chapters and providing them with the marketing materials and support to ensure that their return to NEHS was quick and easy. We will be undertaking a targeted marketing campaign, aimed at currently suspended chapters, while we are in Pittsburgh. This will involve emailing the principals and department chairs at all suspended NEHS chapters. If this fails to work, we will then send a physical letter to the principal. We hope to see a





small number of chapters return to NEHS because of this. The most complicated part of the process was the data mining which must go on to generate the letters and emails.

We will also continue to market to all high schools and middle schools (for the ELA Honor Society) which are in school districts which already feature an NEHS or ELA presence. We feel that reaching out to those who may already have some, if only tangential, knowledge of NEHS and ELA in their district will encourage them to join. We will be reaching out purely to public schools during 2025.

#### NEHS membership, affiliation, and new chapter targets:

NEHS surpassed all its financial targets during 2024. NEHS received 100% more new charters than expected, 75% more chapter reactivations than anticipated, and 15% more annual affiliations than normal. We received 57% more NEHS membership fees than expected during the 2024 calendar year. NEHS will be working to continue growth in all areas this calendar year, although in some of those areas (such as reactivations) this may be more difficult as we have less chapters to work to reactivate.

The only area in which targets were not met was NEHS merchandise sales, where we made 96% of the anticipated total – this is much, much more than we have in the past.

G-merch sales were much higher in 2024 than in previous year; this is partly due to new marketing emails sent out by G-merch to NEHS Chapter Advisors which advertise different merchandise items each month and also related to the installation of a “Merch of the Month” plugin on the NEHS website homepage. Katie and I have also designed a range of new merchandise for NEHS including the new [More Pride, Less Prejudice T-Shirt](#) (which sold out at the NCTE convention) and a new [Women’s History Month T-Shirt](#). We aim to create a comprehensive range of merchandise which we can publicize throughout the year moving forward. Katie and I spend a good amount of time working with G-merch on a range of projects and this is resulting in increased sales and profit for NEHS.

#### NEHS scholarships, awards, and grants:

Thus far, this academic year’s programming has seen an increase in active participation from a range of NEHS chapters. The Advisory Council and I have spent a lot of time tailoring our programming to meet the needs of an increasingly-diverse group of students (both in terms of educational backgrounds and students’ skills and interests). Our interest in working with students interested in theater, communications, and journalism has reaped benefits in terms of increasing enrollment and our programming is changing to adapt to those needs and interests.

The Natalie Diaz-themed [Poetry Writing and Performance Challenge](#) (fall 2024), sponsored by LULAC and part of NEHS Hispanic Heritage Month activities proved to be very popular and the quality of submissions was very high. The [Monologue Writing and Performance Challenge](#) (winter 2024-2025) had less submissions – this is usually the case with the award cycle running over the winter vacation – but was also judged to have been a great success by the evaluators and Advisory Council. The [Civil Rights Podcasting Challenge](#) is planned for spring 2025.

This year, the Advisory Council updated the [NEHS Scholarships](#) application process. It was decided to have [two rounds of applications](#) (fall 2024 and winter 2024-2025). While we had a much larger number of applications during the winter cycle – this was, traditionally, the only time that students could apply – we did have a significant number of applications in the fall. The idea of this change was to allow students more flexibility about when they apply and which text they want to write about (there were [two Common Readers](#)). For 2025-2026, the decision has been made to continue with the two-cycle and two Common Reader approach, but also to expand the opportunity for scholarship applications to juniors, too. Thus, juniors

and seniors will be able to apply in fall 2025 and seniors will be able to apply in winter 2025-2026. The Common Readers for 2025-2026 are [Angie Cruz's \*How Not to Drown in a Glass of Water\*](#) and [Matt Haig's \*The Midnight Library\*](#).

New for 2024-2025 was the [NEHS Convention Presentation Award](#). This award asks our NEHS student members to do something we have never asked them to do before, create an abstract for a presentation that they will give at convention about two key convention texts: this year they are Willa Cather's *One of Ours* and Benjamin Saenz's *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*. Students went through a rigorous selection process and a dry-run presentation in order to be accepted to present at convention. This has been a very expensive project for NEHS and its success will be evaluated during and after convention. Presenting students come from Rwanda, Brazil, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania.

Other new awards for 2024-2025 include two literary artwork contests: one focussed on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [publication of Orwell's \*1984\*](#) and the other on linking literature to inclusion through a collaboration with [Embracing Our Differences](#). The first of these contests was very successful and the quality of the artwork submitted was very high. We look forward to seeing the results of the second.

Planning for the new [2025 UK Literary Tour](#) continues apace with the tour taking place in June 2025. It will visit London, Stratford-upon-Avon, Cambridge, York, Halifax, and Haworth. In a similar adventurous vein, NEHS will also be launching the new [Hebestreit Award for Adventure Writing](#) this spring. This award recognizes the importance of travel and exploration to young people and is awarded in remembrance of [David Hebestreit](#), an Advisory Council member who passed away in late 2024.

Other new awards and initiatives include the launch of the Lambda-sponsored [Ampersand Award for LGBTQIA+ Writing](#). This award forms part of the blossoming partnership with Lambda Literary (more below) and will give voice to an often marginalized group. As you can see from efforts such as the Hispanic Heritage Month Poetry Writing and Performance Challenge, NEHS is making significant efforts to be as inclusive of its student members as possible. NEHS will also be accepting submissions in the spring for the second volume of its journal of critical writing, the [NEHS Triangle](#). The content of volume 1 was a great success and access to publication is being expanded for summer 2025.

Other awards continue to be successful, the [NEHS-Harvard Crimson Student Journalism Awards](#) attract a lot of interest and high-quality submissions, as do the [Intellectual Freedom Challenge](#), [David Wendelin Classroom Library Grants](#), and [Chapter Project Grants](#). The Advisory Council spent a lot of time revamping the [Professional Support Grants](#) (now available for a wider range of activities and with a higher award amount), the [John L. Manear Outstanding Chapter Advisor Award](#) (students can now nominate their teachers; for the first time, this year we are recognizing two outstanding Chapter Advisors), the [Chapter Impact Award](#) (now recognizes more chapters and provides a higher level of funding than before), and the [NCTE-NEHS ELA Innovation Award](#) (which provides more benefits to a wider range of applicants than before).

The NEHS Advisory Council will be spending part of their time in Pittsburgh reviewing all NEHS scholarships, awards, and grants with the aim of making any necessary updates and changes prior to the start of the next school year.

#### NEHS Advisory Council:

The NEHS [Advisory Council](#) continues to be staffed by truly amazing educators who give a lot of their free time to the program. The Advisory Council is now comprised of Cami Badman (IL), Michael Penna (NJ), Chris Tamarri (NJ), Lindsey Ward (TX), Breanne Hicks (TX), Ryan Karpovage (CO/Japan), Jessica Seat (AR), Tonatzin Rodriguez (CA), and Tara Ann Carter (CA).

In St. Louis the Advisory Council discussed the idea of removing their regional designations in favor of each incoming Advisory Council member being a "specialist" in a particular field. This removes the need to find a person in each region whose only talent maybe that they are from a particular geographic location. Our first attempt at this was with the recruitment

of a specialist in inclusion and/or widening participation. This resulted in the recruitment of Jessica Seat, an Advisory from Batesville, AR, to the Council. She has been key to formalizing a process for improving inclusion and widening participation. Moving forward we will recruit other “specialists” in fields of growing concern or importance.

As some of you will know, late 2024 marked the sad passing of NEHS Advisory Council member [David Hebestreit](#) from Livonia, MI. Dave was a stalwart of conventions and an active participant in all NEHS Advisory Council activities. I spoke with his sister about creating an award in his name; In April 2025, we will be launching the Hebestreit Award for Adventure Writing in Dave’s name and will be providing financial support to student members and Chapter Advisors who want to have an adventure and write about it. More information about the [Hebestreit Award](#) is available online.

#### ELA Honor Society outreach and growth:

The ELA Honor Society is growing. While it still remains the smallest of our programs, it has just celebrated its first anniversary (October 2024). We have [upwards of 30 chapters](#) participating now – with 4 of those being international (2 x Panama, Brazil, and Guatemala). Unlike NEHS and Sigma Tau Delta, there appears to be no geographic preference for a middle school English Honor Society and chapters are spread out across the U.S. The ELA Honor Society has met 46% of its predicted annual chapters and 55% of its predicted annual student memberships already, so we are looking at more growth this year than in previous years.

This year, we will be sending physical letters out to middle school principals. We feel that, while expensive, this may be another way of drawing interest to the ELA Honor Society.

Direct marketing about [ELA merchandise](#), just like that we have undertaken for NEHS and Sigma Tau Delta, and which has been led by Katie, has been successful, with large numbers of website views being reported.

#### ELA Honor Society awards and grants:

As we increase the number of schools, and students, participating in the ELA Honor Society, we are able to offer Chapter Advisors a [Classroom Library Grant](#). This was a planned part of the ELA roll out, which only happens when certain criteria (mostly related to income) are met. We hope for a lot of interest in this award.

We are also offering new [Creative Challenges](#) for our ELA students. All of our Creative Challenges focus on contemporary British writers of color, thereby expanding our students’ literary and cultural knowledge. One of these focuses on British poet, Benjamin Zephaniah, and the other two relate to our Big Read text, [Aneesa Marufu’s \*The Balloon Thief\*](#). We are asking our student members to [write poetry](#), [create Book Bantos](#), and [produce their own Zines](#) in an effort to expand our offer to include different ways to analyze text and produce writing.

We will continue to offer the existing [Professional Support Grant](#) to Chapter Advisors.

The ELA Honor Society Advisory Council created a new [T-Shirt Design Competition](#) (see more below).

#### ELA Honor Society Advisory Council:

The inaugural ELA Honor Society [Advisory Council](#) is made up of Elizabeth McLaughlin from Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti Middle School in Elizabeth, NJ, and Bridget Colabello at Morgan Road Middle School in Liverpool, NY.

They have both been making meaningful contributions to the ELA Honor Society and have created a new [T-Shirt Design Competition](#). More recently, they have short-listed texts for the ELA Big Read 2025-2026 and will soon be working on programming for the coming school year.



## **Social Media, Communications, and Technology:**

Namon, Katie, and I have worked on making significant changes to webinars in 2025. This has included Namon sourcing some excellent new webinar software and developing a plan for improving the quality of our output. Those of you who attended the webinar with [Paullett Golden](#) in February will have seen these changes (including audio book readings, competitions, and a more professional format). Our next webinar is with [Bradley Sides in May](#). Our line up for 2025-2026 is yet to be confirmed but does include Angie Cruz. It has been great to see a huge increase in attendance numbers and YouTube video views as the results of the changes that have been made to the webinar format in the last 18 months – thank you Namon and Katie for your help with this.

I have been reaching out to NEHS chapters who have been active on Social Media and adding comments to their posts. This has resulted in a slew of very interesting Social Media Takeover requests which gives the world a glimpse of what is going on at individual NEHS chapters.

The new [NEHS website](#) has been finished and has been extremely successful in its first six months: we have not had a single complaint! Our next technology project is a rebuild of [NEHS Connect](#). This will be finished in June 2025 for release in July/August 2025. This should resolve a lot of the problems that are associated with a piece of 20-year-old technology and will automate a lot of administrative processes that Dawn and Marge currently have to do manually.

[NEHS Museletter](#) blogs for 2025 are taking a focus on student writing rather than Chris Lockwood writing. This is not a time-saving process at all, but does allow students' voices to be heard and for them to take more control of the material that they are receiving in their inboxes. All NEHS Xpress newsletter items will also appear in the blog, so all information can be found in one place.

Katie and I worked on designing a range of new [recruitment materials for both NEHS and ELA Honor Society](#). These will help encourage increased enrollment in NEHS and increased knowledge of the Society among our target student populations.

As we gain more and more pieces of photographic evidence of students and Chapter Advisors actively participating in NEHS activities, we will be able to update the website (and change out the old photos that exist there) and generate new publicity materials. This will allow us to market NEHS more efficiently and effectively on a wider scale.

## **Additional Activities:**

I have undertaken the following additional activities (they are in no particular order) during the period September 2024 – March 2025:

I am judging for the [Lambda Literary Awards](#) (the Lammys) and am chairing a judging panel this year. This has been a fun way to engage, along with many members of the Sigma Tau Delta LGBTQIA+ community, in service on behalf of the Society and to continue to develop our partnership with Lambda Literary. As part of the partnership, Kevin and I have set up funding for the new [NEHS Ampersand Award](#), the [Stemmler/Dennis LGBT& Award](#), and a space for a convention award-winning student to attend the [Lambda Literary Writers Retreat for Emerging LGBTQ Voices](#). We have also generated four new internship opportunities exclusively available to our student members throughout the year (two are focussed on the Lammys and two on the Writers Retreat) – a big thank you to Felicia for all her support with this project. Both Kevin and I are very grateful to have been able to work with you on this. Our first internship opportunity received 89 applications. The second, with a shorter application window, received 91. We have also provided opportunities for 26 of our members (students, alumni, faculty) to serve as judges for the 2025 Lammy Awards.

Kevin and I have also worked to set up a new opportunity for alumni and faculty to spend some time during summer 2025 at the [University of Cambridge](#). Interest in this project (we had 69 applications) has allowed us to send 10 exceptional candidates to [Girton College](#) this summer and has opened the doors for a wholly Sigma Tau Delta-focused summer program at Girton for 2026 – more information about this coming soon!

Our partnership with [Little Free Libraries](#) continues to grow and develop. Little Free Libraries is displaying information about their work at the convention. The new partnership with the [Willa Cather Foundation](#) that Kevin and I worked on has resulted in a new convention award, convention sponsorship, and benefits for NEHS students, too.

Other partnerships, that are more NEHS-focused, that I have generated include those with [Shakespeare & Social Justice](#) (free professional development for NEHS Chapter Advisors), [Double Good](#) for the Chapter Fundraising Week – this has recently been expanded to include Sigma Tau Delta and has raised \$53,126 (NEHS) and \$8,781 (Sigma Tau Delta) for chapters in 2025, the [Library of Congress High School Internship](#) (hundreds of NEHS members submit applications), and [NCTE](#).

Katie and I were lucky to be able to spend 4 days with NEHS and ELA Advisory Council members at the [NCTE Convention](#) in Boston, in November 2024. We saw much more interest in our programming than ever before. We also took merchandise to sell, which was a new innovation, and we sold out of much of the material that had on offer. Katie, Jeannine, and I will be attending the 2025 NCTE Convention in Denver in November. We will have a bigger stand than normal and the capacity to sell more merchandise and garner more interest in ELA, NEHS, and Sigma Tau Delta programs. I have also evaluated submissions for the 2025 NCTE Convention – I can confidently say that the ExOrdo platform that we use is a million times better than that used by NCTE.

I have been working, with the Advisory Council, on activities to celebrate the NEHS 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This has included a re-designed logo, new 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary graduation medallions, certificates sent to all our original NEHS chapters (we have only lost 3 over the course of the last 20 years), a new [social service project](#), the partnership with [Little Free Libraries](#), and [honorary memberships](#) with writers who actively want to engage with us and believe in our mission.

I worked with Kevin and the Convention Chairs on securing [Benjamin Saenz](#) as a keynote speaker, and then dealing with Benjamin's disorganization. It has been a good learning experience, as has taking a more active role, alongside Nicole, with [convention vendors and sponsors](#).

The [ELA branding/website](#) won the 61st GDUSA Design Awards. This was a good recognition of the hard work that went into the planning and design of the ELA Honor Society program in general, and proved that our work with designer Lidia Varesco was successful.

I have evaluated what seems to be a million Sigma Tau Delta and NEHS submissions this year for a range of convention awards, internships, summer program applications, and scholarships. These have always been interesting to read.

### Concerns:

I think, particularly in the current political climate, that it is time for us to have strategic financial discussions to plan for continued organizational stability.



## Society Operations—Jeannine Szostak

### Board Position Report, Spring, 2025 (September 2024 – January 2025)

**Board Position:** Director of Society Operations

**Name:** Jeannine Szostak

#### Chapter Status

Status	Spring, 2025
Active	788
Inactive	41
Deactivated	257

#### New Charters

- Midway University, Midway KY (Southern)
- Brevard College, Brevard NC (Southern)
- California State University, Los Angeles CA (Far Western)

#### Reactivation

- Florida International University, Miami FL (Southern)
- Creighton University, Omaha NE (High Plains)
- Purdue University, Fort Wayne IN (Midwestern)
- University of Wisconsin, Platteville WI (Midwestern)
- Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans LA (Southern)
- Auburn University, Auburn AL (Southern)
- American University in Bulgaria (International)
- Longwood University, Farmville VA (Southern)
- Texas Lutheran University, Seguin TX (Southwestern)
- Northcentral University, Minneapolis MN (Midwestern)
- Texas Rio Grande University, Brownsville TX (Southwestern)
- Freed-Hardeman University, Henderson TN (Southern)
- Plymouth State University, Plymouth NH (Eastern)
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette LA (Southern)
- Creighton University, Omaha NE (High Plains)

#### Certificates

SNHU switched their enrollment from September to November-December in 2025. Due to conflicts with holiday closures for both institutions, as well as SNHU-issued Sigma Tau Delta regalia not arriving in time for graduation, we will be returning to a September invitation enrollment cycle. This will skew the data in the following table.



Sigma Tau Delta Certificates for New Members								
Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	199	133	255	118	170	257	278	252
February	571	529	513	422	488	535	507	668
March	1,640	1,655	824	1,411	1,404	1,455	1,343	-
April	2,088	1,955	901	1,331	1,426	1,396	1,356	-
May	488	523	526	357	351	439	291	-
June	111	141	127	231	69	107	62	-
July	55	50	16	44	24	32	42	-
August	96	172	148	74	129	99	105	-
September	284	753	852	897	1,096	991	408	-
October	958	1,560	1,269	1,503	1,841	1,568	897	-
November	1,152	672	521	580	428	544	866	-
December	170	248	234	109	139	198	635	-
Total	7,812	8,391	6,186	7,077	7,565	7,621	6,790	-

## Updates to Last Board Report

### Stickers

We have contacted several vendors and have been ghosted by all of them. Once Convention is done, we will revisit.

### Redacting Files

This is ongoing.

### Prepaid Per Diem Debit Cards

Due to an increase in the number of prepaid per diem debit cards, we elected to go with an online vendor (thank you, Nicole!). They are able to add an individual's name, a second line of text, and our Convention logo to the card at no additional cost and are delivered to my home, which is so much safer than my having to activate them one at a time at a big box store. This will make the process much simpler for future meetings.

### 1099s and W2s

These were a much simpler process this year; people have been much more efficient at completing the 1099 information requests when their receiving their money is at stake.

## Additional Activities

In addition to serving as VP of the Steering Committee for the City of DeKalb's first Disability Pride event, I began to volunteer at a temporary warming center. This experience has been one of the most wonderfully exhilarating and most gut-wrenchingly devastating of my entire life, and dealing with the reality and the acute mental health crises that can erupt has drawn on every resource and bit of experience in my life. Never in my life did I imagine that I would be pointing out places where a person my children's age could *probably* safely sleep in the woods. Not mentioning the coyotes and other animals that would be sharing their home.

The educator in me has come out full-force and I have recruited six individuals in their early 20s to take a GED preparation class at our local community college. The community college has been very gracious in physically coming to us to do the assessments (I apparently hold the record for recruiting). They also told me that they encourage their GED graduates walk at the community college graduation, often to a standing ovation.

In my passion for describing this, Chris Lockwood and I have begun collaborating on a pioneer NEHS chapter within the community college setting for a GED program (we hope to get an SKD chapter for the college as well); the program is elated as they had been trying to partner with an honor society. We will be talking in April.



In speaking to the incoming students about it, I suggested they write about their experiences; one of them cried when I told her - her favorite thing to do is to write. I've told them that I will be sitting outside the assessment room to ensure they don't flee in frustration; they laughed, but told me they're glad I'm being hard on them because others have given up on them.

Beyond their seeing the reality of not having a diploma or GED, the group is also motivated to have me fulfill my promise of screaming for them at their graduation; they don't know it yet, but so many of the other volunteers also plan to come to do the same – for some, those who have no interaction whatsoever with their parents or families, the idea of having someone in their corner has moved them to tears.

In addition to that, I have another individual experiencing homelessness; he's 24 and has his degree. The first time I saw him, he gave off a distinct "steer clear of me" vibe – which, of course, meant I had to get to know him.

We've since worked together to complete his application to NIU and his FAFSA.

He got me crying when he confided that he plans to major in English. He also wants to become a member of Sigma Tau Delta.

As planned, the overnight warming center officially closed March 11; I brought an emergency proposal forward, and, after some explanation and debate among their Board, the people who were hosting the center agreed to hosting a community-strengthening drop-in center once a week, and to open the overnight center on nights when the temperature drops below 30 degrees. They also purchased the stealth tents I recommended and have put other stealth camping items I suggested on the published wish list.

At the end of that meeting, they asked me to serve as Director of these two programs; having hired on Marge Clements and Nicole Adams has allowed me to start being able to get away from the office every now and again.



## Board Position Report, Spring, 2024

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Director of Marketing and Communications

**Name:** Katie Mudd

### Marketing

- Update and maintain the Society's marketing plan
- Maintain and update branding, licensure, and trademark
- Met with representative from Affinity Marketing to learn more about our partnership and develop plans to actualize goals initially set for pursuing licensure and trademark. Plans moving forward include:
  - Maintain current agreement (zero upfront cost and 50% of royalties collected after the initial \$2k annually—we currently do not break \$2k a year, so we receive no royalties, but we also have no cost to us to maintain trademark on our branding for NEHS and Sigma Tau Delta)
  - Update vendor list to include vendors more suited to members based off member feedback (current vendors are too expensive and require too high of a quantity minimum for custom orders)
  - Develop gift guide to educate members on options for designing and ordering branded merch that does not compete with Gmerch offerings (stadium blankets, license plate holders, water bottles, accessories)
  - Develop video tutorials to promote awareness among members about importance of licensing and using licensed vendors
- Collaborated with Chris Lockwood on establishing new Bookshop.org affiliate shop, which will both promote members to purchase books from independent booksellers while also providing English Honor Societies with 10% proceeds from shared title sales
- Worked with Chris to expand Chapter Fundraising Week to include both NEHS and Sigma Tau Delta; participating chapters raised a combined total of \$61,907 to support student-led community service projects between February 24 – 28, 2025.
- Developed marketing plan for NEHS/ELA with Chris and Namon Kent, building off last year's successful postcard campaign
- Collaborated with Chris on new promotional posters for NEHS/ELA
- Worked with Chris and graphic designer Lidia Varesco Racoma to develop 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo for NEHS
- Comment of Note: Lidia Varesco Racoma won the 2024 GDUSA Magazine Graphic Design Award for her [branding design for ELA](#).

### Electronic Communication

- Promoted Society opportunities (Sigma Tau Delta: convention; Penguin Random House, NCTE, MLA, and W. W. Norton internships; internship stipends; study abroad; summer programs; scholarships, awards, and grants/NEHS: UK Literary Tour, Creative Challenges, Convention Presentation Award, scholarships, awards, and grants/ELA: Creative Challenges and competitions)
- Content creation, editing, and layout of Footnotes/NEHS*Xpress*/ELA Bookworm, blogs, and social media
- Update and manage website content across all Society websites
- Promoted and helped facilitate NEHS author webinar series and informational Sigma Tau Delta webinars
- Collaborated with Matt Hlinak and Namon to facilitate Society voting to ratify constitutional changes approved during fall 2024 Board meeting

- Promote new partnership opportunities for members (Lambda Literary internships, Lifelong Learning Summer Program at Girton College, Junior Fellows Program at the Library of Congress)
- Manage and respond to all sigmaoffice and englishconvention resource inbox inquiries

## **Merchandising**

- Designed, launched, and marketed new *Wicked* movie and Women's History Month T-shirts/stickers with Chris
- Assumed management of SKD merchandising with Gmerch; reviewed existing products/inventory and drafted plan for clearing out stagnant merch and aligning with merchandising goals for the rest of the English Honor Societies; began direct marketing campaign to promote sales of graduation merchandise to capitalize on peak periods of historical SKD sales
- Ordered NEHS 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary medallions and restocked Sigma Tau Delta centennial stoles/medallions to extend through the end of both celebratory years
- Restocked bulk Gmerch inventory (pins/graduation regalia/banners) in advance of tariff implementation
- Replaced/updated Society upright banners and designed and ordered two NEHS 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary upright banners for use at convention and NCTE

## **Sigma Tau Delta *Rectangle* and *Review***

- Collaborated with Managing Editor Carie King and new designer on updated journal cover, including special edition cover for the centennial edition, and updating ePub file to incorporate best practices
- Collaborated with Carie on copy editing and design of the 2025 journals
- Worked with Carie and designer on proofing and finalizing layout of PDF and ePub files
- Disseminated electronic *Rectangle* and *Review* through Prolific Works
- Coordinated and marketed journal internship application

## **Convention Committee/Planning**

- Collaborated with Namon to update and maintain convention website, revising, drafting, and posting content across site
- Marketed convention opportunities through email blasts, special convention issues of Footnotes, convention blogs, and social media ads
- Contributed to weekly convention planning meetings with CO staff and the convention chairs
- Managed convention presenter RSVPs
- Collaborated with Namon to recruit Student Chairs and Faculty Moderators
- Coordinated convention schedule planning with Namon and convention chairs
- Built out and published the convention schedule in Ex Ordo
- Coordinated and set up review for convention awards with convention chairs
- Designed and compiled supplementary pages for a PDF convention program and an abbreviated print program, including index of presenters
- Coordinated with vendors
- Supervised CO Graduate Assistant, Arshiya Bhasin, on set up and design of convention app
- Collaborated with Chris to design NEHS convention T-shirt
- Coordinated convention T-shirt orders and pop-up store merchandise plan with Gmerch

## **Communications Committee**

- Drafted preliminary wire frame for new English.org website to discuss with fellow CO staff members before bringing to the committee

- Plan to build out new English.org, SKD, and English Honor Societies umbrella sites over the summer

### **Service Committee**

- Promote Little Free Libraries partnership
- Publish and promote Book Club Kits and Book Club Quick Kits on the website and through Footnotes and social media
- Collaborated with Kelly Taylor on producing Footnotes article promoting the Book Club Service Award

### **Central Office Liaison to Student Leadership**

- Proctored monthly video chat meetings with SLs
- Worked closely with SAs to assist in setting deadlines, planning activities/assignments, and planning convention
- Collect/track/edit & distribute all SL work with Jessica McCole (blogs, Meet the Deltans survey, Common Reader/Society Recruitment/Spotlight Author videos, Humans of Sigma Tau Delta posts, social media takeovers)
- Worked with SAs in continued revision of SL social media contributions
- Facilitated planning SL convention programming and organizing required materials and supplies
- On-boarded replacement SLs, updated website directories, and updated new SL bios on blog

### **Central Office Liaison to Alumni Advisory Council**

- Met monthly with AC members
- Reviewed “For Alumni” section of new English.org wire frame and planned how best to reimagine the alumni resources section of the website
- Provided resources for ARs to begin work on drafting AR Handbook in the style of existing Regents/SL/SA handbooks
- Planned for alumni programming and announcements at convention
- Discussed alumni opportunities and promotion of new Girton College summer program partnership
- Ongoing oversight of alumni social platforms, including Discord (which continues to thrive), Facebook, and LinkedIn

### **Social Media**

- Oversee social media plan and campaign strategies; supervise Jessica on social media plan execution
- Supervise Jessica on design of social media graphics and distribution plan for ads promoting English Honor Societies opportunities across all social media platforms
- Since November, I have monitored the fluctuating sociopolitical climate as it relates to social media and the continued use of Meta-owned platforms and Twitter. Ultimately, the situation warrants continued monitoring and consideration as there are pluses and minuses to both maintaining our current platforms or branching out. Pervasive advice to social media managers continues to suggest holding steady. We may want to consider growing a following on an alternative platform, such as Bluesky, over the summer and slower fall semester so that if in the future we choose to move, we have an established following elsewhere. However, we’re unlikely to ever match the following we have amassed on Facebook on a new platform.

### **Additional Activities:**

In November, Chris and I attended the NCTE Convention in Boston, MA, joined by NEHS Advisory Council members Michael Penna and Chris Tamarri, where we promoted the English Honor Societies. For the first time this year we set up a pop-up store and sold merchandise to great success. While there, we were able to network with publishing companies and solicit book donations for use as prizes at convention. We have increased our booth size and improved our location for

2025 to further highlight the organization and promote sales. While there, we also had the opportunity to have a celebratory dinner with the NCTE-NEHS ELA Innovation Award winners.

**Concerns:**

Central Office work load in the months leading up to convention continues to be a significant issue. The overall convention project plan timeline and process need to be reconfigured to better utilize slower times of the year.





## Director of Technology–Namon Kent



### **Board Position Report, Spring, 2025** (September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Technology Director

**Name:** Namon Kent

This report highlights the expanded responsibilities I embrace as the Technology Director, especially considering the recent growth within our organization and the pressing need to manage vital technologies that support our societal functions. With the expected expansion of the honors societies, including Sigma Kappa Delta and ELA, along with the ongoing growth of NEHS, my role has significantly extended. My current responsibilities encompass managing various projects, overseeing website development, facilitating board activities, and providing seamless technical support during this dynamic period of growth. These functions are crucial for enhancing our technological capabilities and ensuring alignment with our organization's strategic objectives.

Throughout this journey, the pathway may present challenges, yet my dedication to delivering value remains steadfast. I focus on integrating and managing essential technologies that not only bolster the societies' operations but also support our members effectively. This detailed overview sheds light on my expanded role and the leadership I provide in leveraging technology to propel our collective success. Embracing these responsibilities allows us to thrive and adapt in an ever growing landscape.

#### **Project Management**

- Deployed effective strategies for managing projects
- Sourced, configured, and managed specialized application software
- Initiated projects, determined scope, and planned for implementation
- Identified project issues and created successful action plans
- Provided technical expertise in designated areas such as computer programming, database administration, data analytics, web services, network administration, other designated tasks
- Process of developing standard operating procedures common annual projects

#### **Website/Information Technology and Applications Design and Development**

- Formulated, implemented, and enforced website presence
- Optimized online content for maximum visibility and ranking
- Provided essential support for improving web user experience
- Applied analytics and usability tests to evaluate websites and digital applications
- Evaluated and recommended new web application features
- Oversaw technology operations, security, policies, and systems
- Researched and proposed cost-effective technology solutions
- Developed registration system for annual convention



## **Board Supervision and Communication**

- Communicated effectively with team members and stakeholders
- Developed a specialized technology plan
- Documented project milestones and provided status reports
- Identified and recommended upgrades and configurations
- Provided input and actively participated in developing and adjusting strategic plans to determine future operational needs

## **Administrative Duties**

- Managed databases, email distribution, and scholarship application system
- Managed convention registration for the annual convention
- Assisted with content management and managed WordPress sites

## **Technical Support Duties**

- Managed technical support to members and Central Office staff
- Managed hosting account support
- Managed social media, app management, and digital certificate support

## **Additional Activities:**

Along with my main duties like managing projects, handling admin tasks, and providing technical support, I also worked on improving our platforms and tools to make things easier and more enjoyable for users.

I also reviewed finished projects closely, made tools to help manage website content more easily, automated email processes to save time, and led sessions on new communication tools to help our team work better together.

## **Concerns:**

I am determined to sharpen my communication skills to foster better collaboration within our team and effectively address our increasing workload. Recognizing the need for everyone to step up, I see this as my chance to lead by example and streamline our processes, whether it's in project management, website tasks, board activities, admin duties, or tech support. By prioritizing clear and open communication, I can help ensure that responsibilities are allocated efficiently, allowing us to remain aligned with our goals and deadlines. My focus is on making life easier for everyone as we navigate this heightened workload while maintaining the quality of our work. It's all about fostering an atmosphere of clarity and teamwork, enabling us to keep everything running seamlessly.





**Program Coordinator Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Program Coordinator

**Name:** Jessica McCole

**Social Media**

- Analytics show that from September 1, 2024–March 5, 2025, there has been a
  - 95.27% increase of posts compared to the previous time period
  - 27.59% increase in audience across all platforms combined
  - 529.67% increase in LinkedIn engagement
- Recurring Tasks
  - Posted to Instagram, Facebook, and X daily: one question of the day and a literary-relevant article with an engaging question.
  - Managed discussions, questions, and member requests on all platforms.
  - Responded and reacted to chapter activities on Instagram; sought options for future materials.
  - Edited, created, and posted Meet the Deltans blogs and media across all platforms.
  - Created and posted the newsletter announcements for social media as well as a post on each article in the newsletter (based on content received from Katie Mudd and Chris Lockwood).
  - Captioned, edited, and created thumbnails for Student Leader videos (Common Reader, Society Outreach, and Spotlight Author). Posted these on YouTube and Instagram.
  - Designed and posted social media for NEHS and Sigma Tau Delta blogs based on the content received from Katie Mudd and Chris Lockwood.
  - Created and posted Humans of Sigma Tau Delta posts.
  - Began spotlighting chapters' posts on Instagram to provide encouragement to chapters with social media and to give ideas to chapters who follow us on Instagram.
  - Created Instagram reels of NEHS and ELA student winners' videos.
- Banned Books Week
  - Posted Monday-Saturday on all platforms the previous years' winning posts, articles related to Banned Books Week, and a question of the day regarding BBW.
  - Posted ad 3xs to encourage participation in our social media contest.
- 2025 Convention: Created and posted advertisements for all convention needs, including T-shirt sales, registration, and roommate requests.
- Designed content for other special opportunities, including but not limited to Cambridge Lifelong Learning program, Lambda Literary Program Internship, and Fundraising Week.

**Marketing & Communications**

- Prepared emails and social media for Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and GivingTuesday.
- Uploaded new email addresses to MailChimp.
- Edited contacts' email addresses in MailChimp.
- Created, edited, and sent emails for Sigma Tau Delta
  - Award announcements
  - Special opportunities, such as Scholarship Webinar and Journal Q&A

## Technology

- Webinars: provided captions for all webinars.
- Updated Google Calendar for the website with awards and convention updates.
- Updated basic website edits.

## Scholarships, Awards, and Internships

- AwardSpring
  - Completed awards cycles for Sigma Tau Delta, NEHS, and ELA with thanks to Board and Central Office for testing each cycle beforehand.
  - Creation of awards cycles included application design, rubric setup, distribution amounts, notifying applicants with results, etc.
- Awards Recipient Communication
  - Tracked the information for each recipient from the AwardSpring follow-up on the awards spreadsheet (award, amount, 1099 needs, budget year, cycle awarded, date to be distributed, requirements needed before distribution of funds, email address, name on check, address on envelope, tracking of blog and HSTD requirements)
  - Emailed the recipients of awards that have a blog requirement to tell recipients more about the blog, materials needed, and the due date for the items.
  - Emailed all awards recipients about the HSTD items.
  - Collected and organized the photos and quotes for HSTD
  - Collected and organized the blogs materials
  - Notified Marge when checks need to be mailed
- Evaluator Recruitment
  - Created a Google Form which was sent to all Advisors on October 1. Worked with Amy Gates, Felicia Steele, and Lexey Bartlett to ensure the form was as perfect as possible.
  - Communicated with NEHS evaluators to ensure all awards were reviewed.
- Internship Communications
  - Communicated with contacts from NCTE, Penguin Random House, and W. W. Norton concerning the dates and updates to the internship information.
  - Reminded PRH Priority Candidates to apply to PRH's website and sent their information to PRH contact.

## Additional Activities:

- Worked with and trained Nicole on Google Forms logic, Mail Chimp, and convention roommate requests.
- Assisted in finding an undergraduate student for the round table.

**Concerns:** I do worry about oversaturation of our content since we average five posts a day. However, we have a lot of important content to post. Another concern is staying updated with current trends, such as reels taking priority over stories and creating longer carousels to boost engagement. Concerning awards, we have had fewer applicants than last year. Hopefully, adding a reminder email about awards cycles to our already established social media advertisements will boost the number of applications we receive.



**Event Coordinator Report, Spring**  
(September 2024 – March 2025)

**Board Position:** Event Coordinator

**Name:** Nicole Adams

**Convention Planning**

- After initial training with Namon, updated and maintained board webpage.
- Collaborated with Chris on sponsorships and vendors
- Contributed to weekly convention planning meetings with CO staff and the convention chairs
- Managed travel arrangements for Fall and Spring board meetings.
- Began communications with incoming convention chair regarding theme
- Communicated and negotiated with hotel for additional services and amendments to our contract.
- Collaborated and helped to create Fall and Spring Theme
- Cross check submission names. Entered names and updated as necessary.
- Created reception and dinner tickets.
- Worked with outside vendors for convention
- Updating and creation of printed convention materials
- Attended NIU and union meeting, updated executive director as necessary.
- Began updating next year's convention schedule
- Coordinated hotel sleeping rooms.
- Trained with Jessica on convention roommate requests and A/V emails
- Worked with Jeannine and Matt to resolve conflicts with the hotel
- Worked with Katie to overcome hotel meeting room challenges
- Continued learning about the organization and convention

**Concerns:**

- As the organization grows it may be necessary to update job duties, recognizing and separating convention tasks from other tasks. Currently all tasks are grouped together making it difficult to fully understand my role and expectations.
- To be more aware of the convention budget in real time, it may be helpful to track expenses as they occur and reconcile the convention budget at the conclusion of the event.





## Sigma Kappa Delta Report – Matt Hlinak



### Board Position Report, Spring, 2025 (September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Sigma Kappa Delta

**Name:** Matt Hlinak

- December
  - Traveled to Calhoun Community College to pick up files
  - Executed separation agreements with staff members and issued severance payments
- January
  - With Namon Kent's help, gained access to the Vieth Consulting database
  - Luke Bailey in NIU IT began the transition to Write Away
  - Started working with chapters to enroll new students and work through backlog of certificate requests
  - With considerable help from Marge Clements, gained access to the SKD bank account
- February
  - Ordered \$9,500 worth of pins that still haven't arrived (shipping from China)
  - Communicated to advisors the pending change in databases, the need to move to digital certificates, and the lack of pins
    - I received one mild complaint about digital certificates, but they have been otherwise well received
  - Thanks to Marge's dogged efforts, gained access to Square account for credit card processing
- March
  - Issued charter to North Georgia Technical College
  - Generated award certificates and lined up scholarship payments to preset at Convention
  - Anticipating transition to Write Away will be complete

### Additional Activities:

### Concerns:

SKD has traditionally collected local dues at the time of enrollment and distributed them to chapters. This is a manual process subject to error, it is difficult to account for in QuickBooks, and Write Away will not allow us to charge different amounts for different chapters. I am anticipating push back from advisors when we take this service away.





## Officer Reports



### Immediate Past President–Shannin Schroeder

#### **Board Position Report, Spring 2025** (September 2024 – March 2025)

**Board Position:** Immediate Past President

**Name:** Shannin Schroeder

My role as Immediate Past President role has largely focused on my work as one of the co-chairs of the 2025 Convention. Our work is described in considerable detail in the report for that Committee, but I would add here that I have continued to take a substantive role in helping that event come to fruition. Most notably, I was responsible for coordinating the evaluators for Convention submissions, the creation and scheduling of paper sessions, for working with the CO staff regarding hotel convention rooms, and the reviewing of various materials such as scripts and emails. Throughout the evaluation process, I worked to reconcile our needs and preferences with the sometimes limited capability of ExOrdo (see concerns). Finally, after receiving access to NIU email, I checked and replied to numerous English Convention emails.

My role as Immediate Past President has involved active participation in meetings and email exchanges of the Executive Committee and the work required for our agendas there. In late fall, I contacted Past Presidents and Delta members, asking those members to respond to a conversation about a “faculty alumni” designation. I also charged them not only with helping us celebrate the culmination of the Centennial celebrations but also with providing us with much-needed institutional knowledge.

#### **Concerns:**

The ExOrdo site, while a well-supported platform, has repeatedly proved itself inflexible for the needs of the Convention. Many of the limitations of our processes and Convention materials are a direct result of its inflexibility..

#### **A Personal Note:**

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank my Sigma Tau Delta family for sending flowers after the death of my mother. Because most of the flowers were difficult to bring on the 12 hour journey home, we ended up giving msot to my family and friends at my mother’s funeral. What a special joy it was, then, to receive flowers at home after we returned. The bouquet brightened my spirits for several weeks. I appreciate, too, the many kind messages I received from many of you; they have lingered even longer than the flowers. More than anything, I thank those of you who stepped in to complete my work as I mourned.





**Board Position Report, Spring 2025**  
(September 2024 – March 2025)

**Board Position:** President

**Name:** Lexey Bartlett

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

The duties of the President outlined in the Constitution are as follows:

*The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and of the Board and at the business sessions of the International Conventions. They shall appoint the Standing Committees and such Committees as they deem desirable or necessary. Such Committees shall serve as they deem appropriate, and such Committees shall report to the Board. The President shall be an ex officio member of all Committees (except the Executive Committee).*

In accordance with those duties, I have worked on the following primary tasks:

- **Coordinating Executive Committee activities and Board activities:** This part of my role largely revolved around organizing Executive Committee review and approval of the 2025 budget, and then the process for full Board review and approval, since it was moved out of the Fall Board meeting, and then the same again for the proposed 2025-2026 budget.
- **Schedule and Agenda for the Spring Board meeting and committee meeting schedule:** As part of my duties in presiding over the Board meeting, I have created the schedules and agenda.
- **Directing Traffic:** The President receives communications from the Central Office, Committee Chairs, and others on a variety of topics, so I have brought these as appropriate to the Executive Committee or answered these questions myself or with reference to other appropriate individuals.

**Additional Activities:**

- **Miscellaneous Board/Committee activities:**
  1. Communications Committee: As a member of the Communications Committee, I assisted in evaluating the Outstanding Literary Arts Journal Awards this fall.
  2. Scholarships Committee: As a member/vice chair of the Scholarship Committee, I have attended meetings and assisted with reviewing and rewriting text for the website, reviewed scholarship scores and allocations, helped with planning a roundtable from our committee on recommendation letters, and other small tasks. Amy Gates and Jessica McCole deserve all the kudos for the majority of work on this committee.
  3. Strategic Planning Committee: I submitted a SWOT analysis as requested by Leigh Dillard.
  4. Convention submissions: I participated in evaluating convention submissions in November.
- **Chapter Activities:** We just had our practice session for convention presenters, attended by our dean and other faculty. We have also finished migrating our university's literary arts journal (edited by our chapter) to our new online platform and hope to open submissions soon. We also just met with the outreach coordinator for our public library and have several exciting partnership activities coming up, including some for National Poetry Month.

**Concerns:** I would like to work on addressing the workload of our Board volunteers, something that may be addressed by some upcoming topics in the Executive Committee. Otherwise, my main concern is the current direction of state and federal government policies and their effects on higher education and everyone who lives in the United States.



## Vice President/President-Elect–Leigh Dillard



### **Board Position Report, Spring, 2025** (September 2024 – March 2025)

**Board Position:** Vice President/President-Elect

**Name:** Leigh G. Dillard

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

In keeping with the expectations outlined in the Constitution, I have assisted the President. Our correspondence has primarily been handled over email/Slack conversations.

I helped facilitate the appointment of William Saccavino as a short-term fill-in for the Alumni Representative position vacated by Lexi Gonzalez.

I've revisited bylaw adjustments proposed in the fall and made necessary revisions to the working version of the bylaws.

**Additional Activities:**

- Convention Co-Chair
- Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

**Concerns:**







Executive Committee Secretary –Ami Comeford



**Board Position Report, Fall, 2024**  
(April, 2024 – September, 2024)

**Board Position:** Executive Committee Secretary

**Name:** Ami Comeford

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

No Report Recieved

**Additional Activities:**

**Concerns:**





**Board Position Report, Spring 2025**  
(September 2024 – March 2025)

**Board Position:** Officer at Large

**Name:** Kevin Stemmler

I continue to work with any committee or group that requires assistance. As part of the Executive Committee, I carried out any assigned tasks and performed any tasks I was invited to carry out. I attended regular meetings with the Executive Committee to discuss policy, procedures, and other business. As liaison to Student Leadership, I attended the regularly scheduled meetings (and sent reports to the Regents, by way of Kassia and Felicia). I also participated in helping to fill the AR position when it was vacated. Along with the Convention Co-Chairs, I worked to redefine the Alumni role in our Society. I co-chaired the Service Committee with Kelly Taylor. Among our many projects, we helped to create (along with Convention Committee co-chairs, the Convention Committee, and Student Leadership) Book Club Kits (and condensed, mini versions of BCK), with an emphasis on service.

Three years ago, when I ran for this position, I promised to create new awards and opportunities for our students and faculty members. I devote a great deal of time to fulfilling that promise, as evidenced in my additional activities.

**Additional Activities:** I met weekly with fellow Convention co-chairs Leigh and Shannin and various Central Office staff. I sent and answered daily texts and emails about convention issues, plans and activities. I helped to secure authors and booksellers for our annual Convention and I helped create LitFest sessions. I invited the authors for the Convention and helped to plan their participation. (See Convention Committee report) I continue to attend in-person and video performances by many writers, in order to create a list of candidates for our current and future Convention program and to vet potential speakers. I participated in the new Western PA Book Club Read, which allowed me to connect with the PA Arts & Lectures director, Sony, who we invited to attend our Convention. With Leigh, I helped to secure City of Asylum's participation in our event, too, and are planning a reception with their artists and writers in exile with our Society's authors and visiting authors. I helped secure some sponsorships for the Convention as well. I worked with Leigh on securing White Whale Bookstore as our primary vendor. Shannin and Leigh and I paid a visit to Arlan Hess at City Books (one of ours!) to secure her participation in the event, too. On behalf of the Convention Committee, I applied for (and received) a Proclamation from the City of Pittsburgh Mayor's office, honoring our week's convention and events. I have also been helping draft letters (with Chris) to help Michaelann secure speakers for the New Orleans 2026 Convention. As liaison to Student Leadership, I reviewed the excellent drafts of SL introductions for our keynote speakers, and helped to assign SL to LitFest sessions.

Because of our Author Spotlight, I have been in contact with many Willa Cather scholars for our Convention Lit Fest. Additionally, Chris and I worked with the Willa Cather Foundation to establish a Convention award in Cather studies that we will launch at the Pittsburgh convention. The winner of the award will be published in the Cather Journal. As a result, Cather representatives are participating in and attending the Convention.

With Chris, I continue to work on maintaining a partnership with LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens). In addition to advertising opportunities for our students to attend LULAC Academy, we secured funding for Convention speakers and for September writing contests for NEHS and STD/SKD (centered on Natalie Diaz's work, in celebration of Hispanic Heritage). The Hispanic Heritage contest was a great success, with amazing work produced by our students. We will be giving a LULAC award at this year's convention because of this partnership.



Chris and I routinely met with Lambda Literary to secure a partnership/sponsorship for STD/SKD/NEHS awards and speakers. We created the opportunity for our students, alumni, and faculty members to participate in judging for the Lammy Awards, the most prestigious awards for LGBT writers. We received 90 applications and Lambda selected 27 of our members to judge for the Lammy Awards. Our members' participation created additional funding for awards and sponsorships, since our judges agreed to donate their honorariums back to STD. Subsequently, a winner of our Stemmler/Dennis LGBT& Award will be eligible to participate in Lambda Literary Emerging Writers Retreat, an amazing opportunity for young writers. We were also able to create several new internships with Lambda, with one of our students currently serving as a Lammy Award intern and another to serve as an intern for the Emerging Writers Retreat. We had a very large number of applications for each call as well. Much of the work I have been doing with Chris overlaps with the tasks of the Service Committee, which I am co-chairing with Kelly Taylor. (See Service Committee report for more details)

To serve our alumni members and to help create professional development for faculty sponsors, I worked with Chris to create opportunities for nine members of our Society to attend Life Long Learning classes at Cambridge. As a Girton alum, Chris was instrumental in making initial contacts. As a result of this endeavor, we were able to create the option for undergraduates to attend a summer course at Girton in 2026, designed specifically for our members.

Felicia and I read many applications for various Partnership and Internship submissions. I also volunteered to read submissions for any/all Scholarships and Awards. Naturally, I read many, many submissions for the 2025 Convention. Also, I read all 100 submissions for the Stemmler/Dennis LGBT& Awards. Additionally, I judged for Convention Awards. On behalf of our Society, I have hypothetically judged hypothetical submissions for a major award from a major organization.

**Concerns:** No additional concerns at present.



## Regent and Student Representative Reports



### Eastern Regent–Felicia Steele Board Position Report, Spring, 2024 (September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Eastern Regent

**Name:** Felicia Steele

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

Since September, I have communicated with faculty advisor in my region and other regions largely through email communication connected to my responsibilities as the chair of the Partnerships committee. Due to my on-campus responsibilities as department chair, I have not been as good at communicating information out to the region and to my student leaders as I should have been. For the next year, my primary goal in terms of communication with the region is to mentor potential new regents who can run for the position at next year's election.

I sit on three committees: scholarships, partnerships, and regents. Partnerships takes up the bulk of my time on the board; I remain in communication with the central office, partner representatives (at W. W. Norton, Penguin/Random House, NCTE, and MLA). The advising issue of the *ADE Bulletin* was completed last December. Multiple essays within the volume address the importance of Sigma Tau Delta to student success, and my preface highlights the role of the society in creating vibrant campus communities structured around the society.

As we all have, I've been carried along in the wake of the HMS Chris Lockwood and met to discuss partnerships with LULAC, Lambda Literary, and Girton College.

Multiple local NEHS chapters have had me on campus to address them, and I've assisted our alumni teachers in persuading their school boards to charter chapters. Hopewell Valley Central High School has established a chapter.

A week or so ago, I participated in an informational webinar about Sigma Tau Delta scholarships and internships.

#### **Additional Activities:**

In addition to reading a huge number of internship applications and internship stipend applications, I also served as a reader for the NEHS Intellectual Freedom Challenge, essays for the convention, and convention award submissions.

I also provided a letter of support for a faculty advisor's promotion dossier. At the end of the semester, I will be sending out letters acknowledging the work of internship readers.

#### **Concerns:**

My biggest concern is simply managing my workload and making sure that there will be some continuity when my term as regent is up. I also continue to be concerned about the state of higher education generally and the burnout that faculty around the country are facing. Since Sigma Tau Delta relies so much on volunteers, I worry that faculty will reach their breaking point and have to back away from national service unless we come up with some mechanisms to support them. I don't know exactly what those would look like.





## Board Position Report, Spring, 2025

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Eastern Region Student Representative

**Name:** Matthew Chinique

### General Activity:

In my time so far as a Student Representative, most of my work has consisted of specific assignments in conjunction with the other Student Leaders, but my general regional activity has consisted of sharing materials via the regional Instagram (especially encouraging Convention registration). I participated in one social media “takeover” to highlight an event at my local chapter as well.

### Specific Activity:

Since the fall, I, alongside other student leaders, have routinely attended Autumn and Kelly’s monthly meetings to discuss our assignments and future plans. Throughout the academic year, I’ve created video materials about Natalie Diaz’s poetry collection, conducted interviews to create “Humans of Sigma Tau Delta” posts, and wrote up reviews of local points of interest in Pittsburgh. I also worked with Sophia Jockell and Zach Brady to develop our Book Club Kit on *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*.

In preparation for the Convention, I’ve worked with Dr. Leigh Dillard and three different students who are hosting Research in the Round tables. I sent them feedback, checked in throughout the process, met with them in whatever capacity they were able, and helped them develop their visual aids for the event. I’ve talked with our group of student leaders about the movie night we have planned, and also contributed questions for the Literary Trivia event. As one of the student leaders who will lead a workshop at Convention, I’ve prepared materials to engage participants in a fun/educational sentence diagramming activity.

### Future Goals:

As the academic year comes closer to an end, I want to be more engaged with our social media, using it more frequently and sharing more materials online. Additionally, a goal I’ve discussed with our Regent is using the regional Instagram as a platform for members across the region to submit their own “virtual book talk” to promote/spotlight a book or other piece of literature they want to share or have something to say about. I also want to be more active in setting up discussions between myself, my regent, and my ASR.

**Additional Activities or Concerns:** None at this time. Thank you!



**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Far West Regent

**Name:** Michaelann Nelson

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

I sent five emails to chapter advisors since the last board meeting. They are copied below:

**October 17, 2024**

Dear Sigma Tau Delta Advisors,

I am astonished to find that the leaves are starting to fall off the trees where I live and that we are well into fall! My name is Michaelann Nelson, and I am your new Far West Regent. I want to introduce our student leaders, Zach Brady (Utah State University), Student Representative, and Kaylee Jo Stocks (Utah State University), Associate Student Representative. We have been busy planning regional activities, as well as getting ready for convention.

- Our old Far West Facebook page has been deactivated. Apparently, Facebook is for old people. PLEASE follow us at the new Far West Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/sigmataudelta.farwesternregion/>
- While our region is geographically dispersed, there are some chapters that may be within a couple hours drive of one another. In order to encourage interchapter activities, there is money available to help fund interchapter activities. If you are interested in hosting an interchapter or regional activity, please don't hesitate to reach out to me for funding.
- Come celebrate our 100th anniversary in person! We would love to see more Far West chapters at convention. This year's convention is in Pittsburgh March 19-22, 2025. The location is beautiful, overlooking where the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers come together. There are dozens of restaurants within a five-minute stroll, and wonderful museums nearby, in addition to all of the workshops and roundtables of convention. **The DEADLINE for convention submissions is October 30.** The convention organizers sent out a great video about how to prepare submissions that is on the conference website.
- You will get money just for attending convention, and new advisors will get even more money for attending convention.
- In fact, I will follow up this email with another one about organizing conference roundtables. There are several students looking for participants in their roundtables, and you may have a student looking to participate in a roundtable, so I would like to get a roundtable email thread going.
- As I undertake this new role, I am anxious to see how I can better help you and foster more regional activities and conference attendance. I am also so interested in learning more about each chapter and what y'all do on your campuses. To that end, the student representatives and I created a short survey to



gather input from you. Please take our survey: [https://usu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_enZe5NkVfVTZESq](https://usu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_enZe5NkVfVTZESq)

### **October 17, 2024-ongoing:** Organizing Student Roundtables

One of my projects in the coming year will be to find an efficient way for students to post roundtable ideas and find participants, thereby creating more variety in participants and more opportunity to participate. Until that time, I have been told that the most common method of recruiting for roundtables is through advisor emails. I have several advisors and students who have sent me requests for roundtable participants. If you have a student who is interested in participating in one of these roundtables, please have them contact the organizer directly. There is also interest in forming roundtables on the Common Reader, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*.

### **December 5, 2024**

Dear Advisors,

As the Fall term comes to a close and everyone is in the throes of grading final projects, I am hoping you will share a publication opportunity with your Sigma Tau Delta chapter.

The Far West Student Leaders, Zach Brady and Kaylee Jo Stocks, have developed a Sigma Tau Delta Far West literary journal titled *Intraminutia* to help connect and showcase the work of the students in the Far West Region. Please share the call for papers with your students: <https://www.intraminutia.com/>

When the journal is released, we'll host an online reading for the journal. We hope that this journal will become a fixture of the Sigma Tau Delta experience for the Far West region.

Additionally, if you haven't already, please share the new Instagram account with your students, as the Student Leaders have been running contests on the account: <https://www.instagram.com/sigmataudelta.farwesternregion/>

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, and I hope you are getting ready to make plans to attend our Convention in March!

### **January 29, 2025**

Dear Advisors,

I hope everyone had a restful winter break as we return to classes this year, but I also want to acknowledge the hardship that our colleagues and students in the Los Angeles area have been experiencing over the last few weeks. I'm sure I can speak for all of us, that our hearts go out to all of you affected by the fires. I'm happy to offer assistance in any way that I can in my role as Regent with support for donation drives for those affected or anything else that chapters might think of to offer that support.

Two things:

1. Volunteers are needed to evaluate papers for Convention awards. If you would like to help with this process, please see the copied email below from the Convention Co-Chairs.
2. Common Reader Book Kit and Awards-Our common reader this year is Natalie Diaz' *When My Brother was an Aztec*. There is funding available for chapters who hold events centered on the Common Reader. I am also attaching a copy of the Book Kit that our student leaders developed about the book that you might find helpful to spark discussion and ideas.

Please reach out with any questions or suggestions you may have! I hope to meet many of you in Pittsburgh!





February 6, 2025

Dear Faculty Advisors,

The Sigma Tau Delta 2025 Conference planners are in need of more conference chairs and moderators. Please encourage the students in your chapter who are attending convention to volunteer to chair a session, and please consider signing up as a Moderator if you have not done so. The message and links are below. Thank you!

**Additional Activities:** I worked with my Student Leaders to help get some of the logistics in place to establish a Far West Literary Journal.

**Concerns:** There needs to be a better way organize and diversify roundtables. Ideally, there could be something like an old electronic messageboard where students can post their ideas for roundtables to seek participants, and students who are looking to participate can see what roundtables they might sign up to participate on. This would facilitate so much more diverse panels from more schools and geographic regions. It also beats sending out emails to the same groups of people over and over.





**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Far Western Student Representative

**Name:** Zach Brady

In my society level responsibilities, I have attended nearly every monthly SL meeting and submitted every SL assignment on time. As part of the service committee, I have collaborated with other SLs to create a book club kit for Jesmyn Ward's *Sing, Unburied, Sing* and will finish another for *Aristotle and Dante* before the convention. I have taken on multiple responsibilities to help out at the convention, like leading an SL workshop on publishing creative works and helping with trivia night.

In my regional roles, Kaylee Jo and I created *Intraminutia*, a regional publication for the Far Western region. I helped brainstorm the name and mission, the submission website, and submission guidelines, created the logo, helped create a rubric to judge submissions, blindly evaluated submissions, informed authors of acceptance, and helped plan, format, and design the publication. We plan to publish and print physical copies before the convention. We met as regional leadership at least monthly and recently weekly. We also posted on our regional Instagram.

**Additional Activities:** No additional activities!

**Concerns:** No concerns!



**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** High Plains Regent

**Name:** Kassia Krone

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

Our regional conference in October went well this year. Though it ran slightly shorter than in previous years, we still had representation from several schools both in and outside our region. Our keynote speaker was Adam Nemmers, who is originally from our region, and who has written several books of literary criticism of American literature. He is also a sponsor of a Sigma Tau Delta chapter, and I was hoping that having him as our special guest might bring in more participants from his chapter. I am very proud of the work that my student leaders did to pull the event together, including grouping the panelists with me, hosting a student-led event, submitting their own work, and moderating panels. They have been truly outstanding!

I sent out reminders about deadlines for submission to the national conference and scholarship opportunities. Again, huge thanks to Jeannine for sending the advisor lists! ☺

I volunteered to moderate extra panels at the convention this year.

I volunteered to read/score papers for acceptance into the convention as well as to take on additional readings for awards in multiple categories.

**Additional Activities:**

I met with Felicia, CO, and other Regents to discuss the common reader and author spotlight selections for next year.

I judged the literary magazines.

**Concerns:**

I want to make the transition from me to Dr. Mary Clai Jones as seamless as possible and help her to feel prepared while also not interrupting her sabbatical. If other regents have suggestions about what was most helpful for them when they began the onboarding process, I would welcome that. ☺



## High Plains Student Representative–Isaiah Aaron Russell



### Board Position Report, Spring, 2025 (October, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** High Plains Region Student Representative

**Name:** Isaiah Russell

- Along with the ASR, facilitated, chaired, and presented at the High Plains regional virtual conference.
- Did a social media takeover on the main Sigma Tau Delta Instagram account that documented our chapter's trip to Red Cloud, Nebraska, and raised awareness for Willa Cather as our 2025 Spotlight Author.
- Collaborated with another student leader to produce a Book Club Kit over *One of Ours* by Willa Cather.
- Filmed Spotlight Author introduction videos.
- Wrote and revised an introductory paragraph in preparation for introducing Diana Khoi Nguyen, one of our convention's featured speakers.
- Participated in our Trivia Night Task Force and wrote trivia questions to include for the event.
- Mentored a group of Research in the Round participants, assisted them in completing their visual aids and written materials, and helped them practice discussing their topics in preparation for the event.
- Prepared a Student Leader workshop.
- Worked with the ASR to plan out and create posts for our regional Instagram account that covered regional, organizational, and convention-related updates.
- Reviewed organizational budget before its finalization.
- Attended Student Leadership and Service Committee meetings.
- Prepared for the 2025 spring board meeting and convention by submitting board reports, arranging travel schedules, and coordinating plans with our university's chapter.

#### Conducted various chapter meetings and events in the role of chapter President:

- Promoted the regional and international convention to our new, returning, and prospective members.
- Advertised and volunteered at a Banned Books Week tabling event in conjunction with the campus library.
- Took chapter members on a day trip to Red Cloud, Nebraska, to visit the National Willa Cather Center and her childhood home.
- Began training for and serving on our university's literary and arts journal's editorial board.
- Assisted chapter Treasurer in submitting our annual budget and attended the budget allocation hearing with other chapter members.
- Hosted movie and board game nights for both our chapter and the public.
- Hosted a watching party of the NEHS Jesmyn Ward webinar.
- Held a practice session for members who are presenting work at the convention in which they were able to read their pieces to an audience and receive feedback and questions from peers and faculty members.
- Started planning community events in anticipation of National Poetry Month and volunteering opportunities in conjunction with our city's public library.

#### Concerns:

None.





**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Midwestern Regent

**Name:** Amy Gates

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

I have used the mailing lists Jeannine Szostak has sent to communicate periodically with Chapter Advisors in the Region via e-mail several times about upcoming opportunities. I send email addresses of the bounceback messages to Szostak, and she continues to update and improve our contact information for chapters in the Region. She received a response from Chris Michener at St. Mary's University, Winona, MN, to inform us their chapter had been disbanded when the English major was eliminated and the former Advisor took a different position.

Jonathan Newman, Advisor of the Delta Nu Chapter at Missouri State University, emailed me on 20 February to say their chapter had low participation this year for Convention, but he offered another opportunity for students to present their work, the MSU Undergraduate Literature Conference. With only two days before the deadline to submit applications, I did not share the invitation to the whole Region, but I did share it with my own chapter, and one of my students applied, was accepted, and will be presenting at the conference the first week of April. I appreciate this example of local chapters co-operating, and I would like to foster more of this across the Region.

I awarded seven Regents' Common Reader Awards to the following: the Alpha Tau Iota Chapter at University of Iowa, the Alpha Epsilon Eta Chapter at Stephens College, the Alpha Nu Nu Chapter at College of the Ozarks, the Alpha Chi Alpha Chapter at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, the Lambda Xi Chapter at Missouri Southern State University, the Kappa Tau Chapter at Marian University, and the Gamma Beta chapter at Morningside University.

Midwestern SR Jo Mahlum and ASR Emily Palmisano and I have had infrequent communications, and the podcast they planned to continue this year has not come to fruition.

**Additional Activities:**

Chair of the Scholarships and Academic Awards Committee and a member of the Regents Committee and the Communications Committee. In my role on the latter committee, I assisted with evaluating for the Outstanding Literary Arts Journal award. I believe I have attended all meetings held to date.

**Concerns:**

None at this time and also too many to mention.





Midwestern Student Representative—Jo Mahlum



**Board Position Report, Fall, 2024**  
(April, 2024 – September, 2024)

**Board Position:** Student Representative for Midwestern Region

**Name:** Jo Mahlum

No Report Submitted





Southern Regent–Heidi Williams



**Board Position:** Southern Regent

**Name:** Heidi Williams

No Report Submitted







**Board Position Report, Spring 25**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:**

**Name:** Sophia Jockell, Southern SR

1. Attended all but one Student Leadership Committee meeting since September.
2. Attended and participated in the Fall Board Meeting in Pittsburgh, PA.
3. Met with my ASR and Regent twice—mainly staying in touch over phone and email communication.
4. Created a book club kit for Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward with another SL.
5. Assisted with and presented at the Southern Regional Conference in October.
6. Took over the Instagram in October for the Southern Regional Conference.
7. Wrote a blog post about attending convention even if someone is not presenting—shared via email, website, and social media.
8. Worked to keep our regional Instagram updated with feed/story posts and interactions.
9. Signed up for a Student Leadership Workshop table and am working to gather all of my supplies.
10. Signed up for Research in the Round Mentoring—I've been working with my mentees on their visual aids and questions.
11. Worked with my book club kit group to create another kit featuring Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Saenz.
12. Signed up to chair LitFest sessions at the Convention.
13. Worked with my JSA to write an introduction for Benjamin Saenz and his keynote speech.
14. Hosted paper reading practice sessions and final presentation night for my chapter to prepare for the convention.

**Additional Activities:**

None.

**Concerns:**

None.



## Board Position Report, Spring, 2025

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Southwestern Regent

**Name:** Dr. Sonia Mae Brown

### Summary of Activities

As the Southwestern Regent for Sigma Tau Delta, I have dedicated the past several months to strengthening communication, reviving inactive chapters, and providing ongoing support to faculty advisors and student members. Recognizing the diverse needs of chapters across my region—spanning Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Arizona, and New Mexico—I have implemented targeted outreach strategies to engage faculty, encourage student leadership, and foster chapter sustainability.

- **Outreach to Regional Chapters:** To establish and maintain direct communication, I conducted personalized outreach efforts, including email campaigns, virtual meetings, and individual check-ins with faculty advisors and student leaders. These efforts were aimed at understanding the unique challenges faced by each chapter and tailoring support accordingly. I also created a regional newsletter to disseminate information about upcoming deadlines, Society opportunities, and best practices for maintaining active chapter status.
- **Supporting Deactivated and At-Risk Chapters:** One of my primary goals has been to assist deactivated and struggling chapters in regaining their momentum. I identified several inactive chapters and reached out to past faculty advisors and institutional contacts to determine barriers to reactivation. Through a series of strategy sessions, I provided detailed guidance on petitioning for reinstatement, navigating institutional bureaucracy, and developing student interest. However, administrative turnover and lack of student engagement at some institutions remain significant challenges, necessitating ongoing efforts to establish sustainable chapter leadership.
- **Chapter Support and Faculty Engagement:** Understanding the crucial role that faculty advisors play in the success of Sigma Tau Delta chapters, I implemented structured support initiatives, including open office hours. Over a month-long period, I hosted three virtual sessions to provide faculty advisors with direct access to guidance on chapter management, event planning, and funding opportunities. Despite extensive promotion of these sessions, only one faculty advisor attended, highlighting a potential gap in faculty availability or interest in virtual engagement. As a result, I am now developing alternative methods of faculty support, such as one-on-one scheduled meetings, an advisor resource toolkit, and a more streamlined communication system to facilitate engagement.
- **Southwestern Regional Conference:** This year, the Southwestern Region successfully hosted a regional conference, providing students and faculty with an opportunity to present research, engage in professional development, and network with peers from across the region. The event featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, and interactive workshops aimed at strengthening the academic and leadership skills of attendees. The success of this conference underscored the importance of regional gatherings in fostering engagement and collaboration among Sigma Tau Delta chapters.
- **Collaboration with LAORC:** I met with the Literary Agents of Change (LAOC) to discuss potential partnerships and collaborations with institutions within the Southwestern Region. Our discussions focused on increasing access to open educational resources, developing cross-institutional literary initiatives, and creating opportunities for faculty and students to engage in interdisciplinary projects. These collaborations aim to enhance chapter sustainability and provide members with broader academic and professional development opportunities.
- **Common Reader Award Participation:** Encouraging student and faculty involvement in Society-wide initiatives has been a key focus. I actively promoted the Common Reader Award and worked



closely with multiple chapters that successfully petitioned for recognition. Their participation in this initiative demonstrates a continued commitment to fostering literary scholarship and engagement. The following chapters submitted common reader award forms:

- Alpha Psi Nu Chapter (UT Dallas)
- Alpha Zeta Psi Chapter (New Mexico Highlands University)
- Psi Delta Chapter (Texas Tech)
- Alpha Omega Theta Chapter (Philander Smith University)

## Additional Activities

- **Encouraging Conference Participation:** I have promoted student and faculty involvement in regional and national Sigma Tau Delta conferences, offering guidance on proposal submissions, travel grants, and presentation preparation. I have also reached out to faculty advisors to encourage student research presentations and attendance at these events.
- **Expanding Regional Presence:** I have identified institutions within my region that do not currently have active Sigma Tau Delta chapters and have initiated conversations with faculty at these institutions to discuss the benefits of chartering a chapter. I am developing an informational session specifically for prospective chapters.

## Concerns

- **Low Faculty Engagement:** The limited attendance at open office hours suggests that faculty advisors may need alternative methods of support. Moving forward, I plan to conduct an anonymous survey to assess faculty needs and preferences for engagement, which will help shape future outreach strategies.
- **Challenges in Chapter Reactivation:** Many institutions with deactivated chapters cite administrative hurdles, student disinterest, or faculty transitions as primary barriers to reestablishment. While some institutions have expressed interest in reviving their chapters, there remains a need for sustained faculty and student leadership to maintain long-term viability. To address this, I am exploring mentorship models where thriving chapters can provide peer support to struggling chapters.
- **Funding and Institutional Support Challenges:** Some chapters struggle to secure funding and institutional support for activities and travel. I will work on identifying grant opportunities and developing advocacy strategies for faculty advisors to help them secure the necessary resources for their chapters.

Moving forward, I will continue refining my outreach and support strategies to enhance engagement and sustainability within the Southwestern region. My focus remains on building a vibrant network of active chapters, ensuring that faculty advisors and students receive the necessary resources, and fostering a stronger sense of regional collaboration within Sigma Tau Delta.

**Dr. Sonia Mae Brown**

Southwestern Regent

Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society





**Board Position Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Southwestern Student Representative

**Name:** Carmen Lok

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

General:

- Spotlight Author promotional video
- Common Reader promotional video
- Social media takeover (Book-Quet Fundraiser)
- Second Humans of Sigma Tau Delta post
- September Newsletter introduction
- October Newsletter fun tidbit
- Cynthia Kadohata convention speaker introduction
- *A Place to Belong* and *The Bluest Eye* book club kit
- Convention committee and monthly student leadership meetings

Regional:

- Regional advertisement for Southwestern Regional Conference
- Session chair for Southwestern Regional Conference
- Maintained regional lead advisor list (added chapter Instagram accounts)
- Regional chapter groupings (placing chapters into groups of three based on geographic proximity to encourage regional engagement) (in-progress)
- Regional Instagram posts (convention and events)
- Regional meetings with Regent and ASR

**Additional Activities:**

**Concerns:**

- Connections with chapters – My ASR and I sent emails to advisors to touch bases with them and check on the status of their chapters, but we have not yet received responses from half of the chapters. Attempts were also made to connect with the chapters on Instagram, but the respective accounts were difficult to locate. We are still working towards creating the regional chapter groupings but we do have concerns about interacting and connecting with chapters who are harder to contact.
- Recognition of WordybyNature emails - My ASR expressed a concern that the WordybyNature email addresses are seen as scam emails by the advisors. It might not be known to the organization members that these email addresses are official ones affiliated with the organization.

## Student Advisors



Senior Student Advisor–Autumn Koors Foltz



### Board Position Report, Spring, 2025

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Senior Student Advisor

**Name:** Autumn Koors-Foltz

- Co-chaired the Student Leadership committee with Kelly Taylor including duties such as:
  - Routinely checked in with other Student Leaders and committee members to ensure consistent communication and follow-up on all committee affairs.
  - Created monthly meeting agendas and When2Meet polls ahead of each SL meeting in October, November, January, and February.
    - Facilitated these same monthly meetings.
  - Headed one of two December task forces to plan and facilitate Student Leadership Workshop to be run at the convention.
  - Contributed trivia questions to the trivia task force.
  - Created “Autumn’s Practical Guide to Board Meetings and Convention,” a multipage document to give practical tips and ideas for SLs who may be experience board meetings and/or convention for the first time about topics like travel, participation, and packing.
  - Curated a convention schedule to fairly assign duties to all Student Leaders and ensure all members knew where to be and when during the event, on both a spreadsheet and a Google calendar.
  - Aided Leigh Dillard and Shannin Shroeder in continuing the mentoring process for Research in the Round participants by aiding SL sign-ups.
  - Wrote an introduction for Natalie Diaz.
  - Gathered Common Reader and spotlight author video submissions and supported SLs in their filming efforts.
  - Supported SLs as needed in their service to committees and task forces, in submitting the assignments listed above, and in submitting their spring 2025 Board Reports.
  - Monitoring the SL Teams channel and sending reminders of approaching due dates and upcoming meetings.
  - Facilitated Student Leadership creation of various book club kits by assigning books as interest was suggested and also participated in the creation of a book club kit for Kassia Krone.
  - Prepared materials for convention including Bingo Boards for Student Leadership Workshop and questions for the alumni SL panel.
- Contributed to various committees including Convention, Communication, and Membership Initiatives.
- Met with the Convention Chairs alongside Kelly Taylor to logistically plan for Student Leadership involvement.
- Managed my own teaching load as an instructor of first year composition!

#### Additional Activities:

As my final year on the board as a student representative comes to a close, I want to thank all of you so much for your support and help in my own development—being on this board has been one of the highlights of my academic and professional career and I will miss this space greatly!





**Board Position Report, Spring, 2024**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Junior Student Advisor

**Name:** Kelly Taylor

As co-chair of the Student Leadership Committee, I maintained communications with SLs, answering any questions that arose in between meetings. I took the minutes at monthly SL meetings. In collaboration with the Senior SA, I reviewed SL Convention assignments and met with the Convention Committee co-chairs to review the schedule. I led the Trivia Night task force in creating ninety questions for the event and successfully got them all in the Kahoot.

As co-chair of the Service Committee, I reviewed applications for the first LAMBDA internship. I also wrote a blog encouraging chapters to apply for the Book Club Service Award, which is currently active. I helped lead a meeting in November and sent committee updates about the Book Club Kits via email in an asynchronous January check-in.

In preparation for Convention, I mentored three students for Research in the Round. I also created a presentation on the different roles in publishing for the SL Workshop. My final task was writing and revising an introduction for Benjamin Alire Sáenz with Southern SR, Sophia Jockell.

**Additional Activities:**

I was very recently hired as an Associate Copy Editor at Random House Children's Books (yay!!!). The team there has been so incredible in welcoming me back after my internship.

I am more than halfway done with my MA thesis and gearing up for defense mid-April. It feels crazy to be graduating already this May.

Thank you very much to everyone who reached out regarding my bout in the hospital in November. Recovery has been challenging, and it is likely I'll have to undergo a noninvasive surgery later this year. But I have been doing much better over the last two months!

**Concerns:**

Though I sent out a healthy number of applications for PhD programs, I have only received one acceptance, from Claremont Graduate University, and it is not a fully funded offer. I'm waiting to hear back from one final school, but the current socio-political climate suggests the odds of an acceptance from there are very low. I'm concerned about the feasibility of affording additional schooling, even with the fifty percent scholarship CGU offered. I'm not sure I can get enough external scholarships to offset the cost of continuing my education. I greatly appreciate any ideas or suggestions about how to make this work. CGU seems like a great school otherwise! They offer a dual PhD track, so there's a chance I could get two (one in history and one in English), if I can figure out how to afford it.

On another note, it might help to consider codifying or highlighting what steps that need to be taken to inform the rest of the board when an SL resigns, including who is responsible for reporting it and to whom. This would make for the most efficient lines of communication possible.



**Board Position Report, Spring, 2024**

(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Alumni Representatives

**Name:** Tiffany Nodle & Will Saccavino

**Tiffany:** I am an admin on the Alumni Facebook group and for the Alumni Discord channel. I am an active participant in both of those spaces. I am the chair of the Alumni Advisory Council, and I create and schedule our meetings as well as set the agenda for each of our meetings. I serve on the Service, Partnerships, and Convention Committees as well as the Membership Initiative Task Force. I have continued to work on the Alumni Workshop for convention with the help of Will and the Alumni Advisory Council. I helped create the Book Club Kit for Clare Beams' *We Show What We Have Learned*.

**Will:** Since being brought on as an Alumni Representative, I have attended the Alumni Advisory Council meetings. I am now an admin on the Alumni Discord channel. I have assisted Tiffany with the Alumni Workshop details. While my time so far has been brief, I am looking forward to attending Convention as an Alumni Representative and to serving the board.

**Additional Activities:**

**Will:** I have helped set up a photography “hit list” for key moments of the convention.

**Concerns:**

None at this time.







## Editor of Society Publications–Carie King



### Board Position Report, Spring 2025

(September 2024 – March, 2025)

**Board Position:** Managing Editor of Society Publications

**Name:** Carie S. Tucker King, PhD

**Using the duties of your position as described in the Constitution as your guide, please provide a summary of your activities during this time period and note any special concerns.**

- September
  - Met with Kassia and then the Communications Committee.
  - Worked with Katie; both edited the *Review* and the *Rectangle* (final changes) and then provided the content to the new designer, who moved content to the PDF.
  - Reviewed minutes from committee meetings and Fall Board Meeting. (Could not attend because of family issues.)
- October
  - The designer provided Carie and Katie with several proofs for them to review. (We did have some issues shifting the PDF to an ePub, but he solved the issues.)
  - Met with Scholarship Committee.
  - Reviewed Fall Awards Cycle pages. (Jessica did a great job!)
  - Reviewed Scholarship Application prompts and provided feedback.
- November
  - Attended Service Committee meeting.
  - Finalized both journals but determined to hold them until January 2025 so they would not get lost in the members' emails.
  - Provided comments to students who submitted, were not published, and asked for feedback. (Reviewers' comments are not sent directly to student authors; Carie works through the comments and paraphrases to soften comments and ensure that they benefit the writers.)
  - Recruited PhD student (Swati Anwasha, UTD chapter President) to participate in S&AA Roundtable.
- December
  - Wrote letters of recommendation for two interns.
  - Reviewed and evaluated submissions for Outstanding Literary Journal Awards and worked with reviewers to choose award winners.
  - Approved 1924 Scholarship review outcomes.
- January (out of commission for surgical procedures)
  - Katie released the journals with intern blog posts. (Responded to several emails from authors and/or students about the publications.)
  - Contacted Faculty Reviewers to ask for help reviewing Intern Applications.
- February
  - Reviewing internship applications.
  - Working with reviewers to choose internship candidates.
- March
  - Interviewing internship candidates.
  - Hiring three summer interns.
  - Preparing for journal submissions.
  - Connecting with published *Rectangle* poets to schedule reading at Convention.



**Additional Activities:**

None. (This academic year has been challenging with my father’s accident, surgery, and recovery and my own medical care. But we got the journals out, and I am very proud of these issues!)

**Concerns:**

We are seeing submission numbers decrease, and we don’t want to see that. How can we encourage more students to submit writing for consideration?

I would like to add a multi-media element to the next issue of the journals. (I hope to discuss with the Board during our Spring Board Meeting.)

No other “concerns.” The process is comfortable, and the interns have been incredible! (I love this position!)





## Committee Reports from Committee Chairs



### Communications Committee—Carrie Fitzpatrick / Kassia Krone **Committee Reports, Spring, 2025** (September, 2024 – March, 2025)

**Committee:** Communications Committee

**Committee Chair:** Kassia Krone and Carie King

**Committee Members:** Kassia Krone, Katie Mudd, Lexey Bartlett, Amy Gates, Autumn Koors-Foltz, Namon-Kent, Sophia Jockell

#### **Summary of Committee Activities:**

1. We discussed the website redesign and concluded that our website will look similar to the layout of ELA or NEHS. We are moving away from Cascade and into Wordpress. We tried to determine the big categories we wanted for the top of the page: About, Students, Teachers, Alumni, Wordy by Nature, Join us, and Opportunities. We need to make the website more accessible and navigable and create uniformity across the platform. We want to integrate the blog with the website. Student leaders pointed out that some of the pages meant to be serving students are not actually doing that and suggested that we add more student activities and visuals. Namon asked us to consider each page's purpose and see if we thought it was doing that. Katie recommended we trim the website and cut unnecessary pages or duplicate info.
2. We discussed the use of AI and agreed that we need to make an official policy and define it on our terms. Student leaders felt that AI is valuable, but our organization is not the venue for AI. They expressed that AI should not be used to generate papers or creative works as it removes voice and places an emphasis on product and not process.
3. Katie brought up the use of Facebook regional pages and suggested we delete and/or archive the material. Meta has sunset third party publishing to groups and has made it more challenging for the central office team to post. Scheduling software that was used in the past is no longer available, and posts must be done manually. People are not actively engaging with the Facebook regional pages, and the student leaders have moved to Instagram. We asked if we needed a motion to delete or archive, and Lexey said we could just inform but open it for discussion. We agreed that some of the Facebook content should be saved and archived for future reference, but that no new material needed to be added to Facebook hereafter.
4. Namon is working on a website site map and will send that to us with specific pages to review. Divide the pages among the committee. If necessary, seek feedback from other committees regarding relevant pages.
5. We need to draft an official statement on AI, which we plan to do at the Spring conference.
6. We judged the literary journals. Here are the results: Damozel, Harbinger, and Lion's Eye.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:** None at this time

**Special Concerns:** None at this time.





## Committee Reports, Spring 2025

(September 2024 – April 2025)

**Committee:** Convention Committee

**Committee Chair:** Leigh Dillard, Shannin Schroeder, Kevin Stemmler

**Committee Members:** Nicole Adams, Matt Hlinak, Namon Kent, Autumn Koors-Foltz, Carmen Lok, Emad Mirmotahari (non-board affiliate), Katie Mudd, Michaelann Nelson, Donna Newsome, Tiffany Nolde, Lucy Perry, William Saccavino, Bradley Sides

### Summary of Committee Activities:

Shortly after the Fall Board meeting (10/1), the co-chairs participated in a Society Webinar discussing the details of the Pittsburgh Convention.

The co-chairs have continued to meet weekly among themselves since spring of 2024 in a “Convention Reporting Meeting” and added the CO staff to meetings in the fall. We’ve consulted with the committee on various decisions through either email or short Zoom meetings (22 November, 12 February) and have held numerous impromptu meetings related to the Convention with Board members, the CO, and external parties. We created a comprehensive schedule, continued to pin down speakers, expanded on the ideas of a LitFest, and made decisions about registration and events.

Convention paper submissions, roundtable proposals, and Research in the Round (RitR) topics were due on 30 October. We received 719 submissions—664 papers, 28 roundtables, and 12 Research in the Round first round proposals. After review, we accepted 527 papers (79%), 23 roundtables, and 8 RitR topics, giving an additional 2 the option to Revise and Resubmit. A second round of submissions for RitR, due 6 January, added 10 more acceptances for a total of 18.

From a broad perspective, the co-chairs have tried to embrace the “One of Ours” Convention theme not just as an inclusive label for our current members traveling to Convention but also as a way to identify those who are part of our expansive alumni network, one that includes past students as well as faculty/advisors. Look for the “One of Ours” label on speaker tags and books by alumni sold in the vendor space.

### 2025 Event Planning

We’ve added a few new features to this year’s program: LitFest, expanded professional development sessions targeting advisors and alumni, and a vendor space beyond a partnership with a local bookstore or GMerch space. The two one-hour **LitFest** sessions (Friday, Saturday) feature a blend of local speakers and four who are “One of Ours”—Kassia Krone, Cameron Barnett, Billie Tadros, and E. Kerr—presenting on topics in their areas of speciality. These sessions are also an opportunity to integrate more speakers into the program, even in smaller sessions than the keynotes, or to interact with speakers in a second (more personal) space. We’ve also expanded the series of **Professional Development Sessions** beyond those presented in the past, tailored not just to students and Advisors but also to alumni members. These events celebrate the accomplishments of the Honor Societies, representing SKD, NEHS, and Sigma Tau Delta. We have four options on Thursday 9:30-10:45 a.m. and five on Thursday 4:45-6:00 p.m., opposite Research in the Round. These sessions give us an opportunity to bring in guests from the Pittsburgh community to speak to Convention attendees but are also an opportunity for us to highlight the good work our alumni are doing across various fields of interest. The dedicated **vendor space** will, in some ways, have a familiar look in that it will feature a local, independent bookstore—White Whale Bookstore—in the center of the room. City Books and City of Asylum Bookstore, two more indies from Pittsburgh, will also have tables in the space (complementing the offerings by White Whale),

along with The Willa Cather Foundation, MLA, and others. As usual, GMerch will have a separate space for official Society gear, regalia, and Convention t-shirts.

**Research in the Round (RitR)** continues to develop with the help of Student Leadership mentoring. We continue to support the two rounds of submission, allowing those whose papers were not accepted—or those who were perhaps not inducted until late fall—a chance to participate in the Convention. Given the room size, we have found 18 to be a good target number for Table Hosts. We added two new external judges for the first round of RitR submissions, which was a positive experience. Six SLs volunteered for the mentoring process: Matthew Chinique, Arita Elderkin, Sophia Jockell, Isaiah Russell, Kaylee Jo Stocks, and Kelly Taylor; and they spent February and early March working with their selected Table Hosts to assist them with revising/refining their questions and creating a single-page visual document (most designed in Canva) to represent their topic. Access these visuals [here](#).

Duquesne University is serving as a local host chapter for the Convention and has, in particular, provided a strong contingent of volunteers for the registration table. In return for at least 12 shifts worked at the registration table (or other locations at Convention), the co-chairs agreed to comp the registration for 6 host-chapter volunteers. This offer is limited to the host chapter.

**The Convention Travel Reimbursement**—approved by the board in fall of 2024 and initially budgeted for 5 recipients of up to \$1500—has been a promising first step for offering travel support to students. Through coordination with the CO, we’ve arranged to support five randomly selected students as follows:

name	travel	hotel	per diem	registration	personal total	notes
Chio, McKagen		\$728.00	\$260.00	\$120.00	\$1,108.00	travel paid by chapter
Klein, Ophelia	\$715.37	\$546.00	\$118.63	\$120.00	\$1,500.00	hotel Wednesday–Saturday
Knutson, John	\$620.00	\$728.00	\$152.00		\$1,500.00	registration paid by chapter
Redling, Renae	\$298.00	\$728.00	\$260.00	\$120.00	\$1,406.00	
Whitted, Trey	\$777.37	\$728.00		\$120.00	\$1,625.37	
allowances		182/night	80/day of event	\$120.00		Less \$15 R breakfast; less \$25 F/lunch
<b>totals</b>	\$777.37	\$728.00	\$0.00	\$120.00	\$7,139.37	
<b>budget</b>					<b>\$7,500.00</b>	
over/under					\$360.63	

Part of the remaining \$360 will be distributed in three \$100 gift cards at the Thursday morning student workshop. See “recommendations” below for additional information about carrying this travel support forward.

Through the work of Kevin and Chris Lockwood, we’ve organized multiple partnerships to assist with funding speakers and awards at the 2025 Convention. We were able to obtain \$30,000+ in donations and sponsorships for this year’s event, which assists with Convention expenses.

- **Lambda Literary:** Lambda is donating several boxes of books from last year's Lammy Awards, partly for service projects and also to distribute to the Stemmmler/Dennis LGBT& Award winners. In addition to receiving books and their checks, each winner will also receive an application for the Lambda Literary Emerging Writers Retreat. One of the LGBT& winners will be selected to attend the retreat. Donations from our members judging for this year’s Lammy Awards will help with expenses for LGBT& Awards and speakers. As an on-going partnership, we will need to find ways to include LGBT& speakers, programming, and awards in our annual conventions.
- **LULAC:** Thanks to this partnership, we are able to offer our first award to honor Hispanic/Latino/Latina work. We are also promoting LULAC Academy, part of their annual Convention. LULAC is also co-sponsoring Natalie Diaz and Benjamin Alire Saenz’s presentations.

Moving forward with the partnership, we will be obligated to include LULAC sponsored programs, awards, and/or speakers in our annual conventions.

- **Willa Cather Foundation:** We established an additional award for work in Cather studies. Two representatives from the Cather Foundation will be attending the Convention and participating in panels and sessions. As several Society members having ties to the Foundation, we are truly celebrating “One of Ours.” Future conventions need to advertise for Cather Award submissions, especially considering they are willing to publish our winning student’s work in their prestigious journal.

### *2026 Event Planning*

In preparation for the 2026 Convention in New Orleans, we recruited and have been working with Michaelann Nelson to assist in her chairing efforts for that event. Southwestern Regent Sonia Mae Brown and Chloe Evans (an Advisor from Loyola University) will serve as co-chairs. Michaelann will undoubtedly have more updates to share with us about her planning at the Board meeting. The 2025 co-chairs continue their work in the background on a convention chair handbook, parts of which they have already shared with Michaelann, to be of service as she works on New Orleans details.

The committee also initiated action for the Executive Committee to induct Matt Hlinak and Chris Lockwood as members of the Society. This designation, which Board President Lexey Bartlett coordinated through the NIU chapter, will help Matt and Chris, who both hold degrees in English, represent the Society moving forward, not just in Convention-related negotiations but also in fostering new partnerships.

### **Recommendations or Resolutions:**

*We did not vote on this item at the Fall Board Meeting even though it appeared in our report...our error!*

Recognizing that our system for identifying past speakers as Honorary Members had lapsed in recent years, the Convention Committee recommends the Society extend honorary memberships to the following past Convention speakers (listed alphabetically since that’s how they will be integrated into the existing list):Karen Auvinen (2021)

- Nicky Beer (2023)
- Richard Blanco (2022)
- Michael Branch (2021)
- Winifred Brown-Glaude (2023)
- Wayne Miller (2023)
- Simon J. Ortiz (2015)
- Emily Pérez (2023)
- Brenda Peynado (2023)
- Carl Phillips (2024)
- Gary Soto (2015)
- Leslie Marmon Silko (2015)
- Nic Stone (2022)
- Maryfrances Wagner (2024)

The Convention Committee also recommends that

- a) the list return to the Society’s digital publications and appear on the website; and
- b) this task becomes one of the final responsibilities of the Convention Committee each year, allowing the organizers of convention to recommend recipients for this honor before their term has ended in the summer.

In light of the information above, **the Convention Committee moves to add the authors listed above to the Society’s Honorary Member list.**

Additionally, we recommend seeking ways to expand the pilot version of the Convention Travel Reimbursement offering by pairing with sponsors willing to support this type of funding. In terms of logistics, we would advise future chairs to coordinate with the CO to generate a simple survey to request information



from each traveller and to set deadlines for flight bookings to save money. Those accepting this reimbursement should expect to arrive on the first day of Convention and stay through the Awards Ceremony.

Finally, we recommend creating a standard submission deadline in the final week of October, regardless of the date of Convention.

### **Special Concerns:**

As has been an issue for more than a decade, the technologies we're using for the Convention are concerning. The co-chairs recommend a long-term re-evaluation of the applications used for this event (currently ExOrdo), with careful research into the platforms used by other large-scale humanities conventions and events—MLA, AWP, DragonCon, etc.—as potential options. In particular, the 2025 co-chairs are discouraged at the number of work-arounds required for (or inability to standardize) things like italicizing titles of books and labeling the separate roles of chair and moderator accurately. Likewise, the evaluation system on ExOrdo—requiring judges to download submissions to their own computer or device—is not ideal, particularly for those evaluators whose systems are throttled by vigorous university guidelines about external downloads. Similarly, we suggest that we look for a system that allows for conditional logic at the front end to streamline the submission process. That the current system is not ADA compliant is also an issue.

We suggest embedding more information in the registration form next year to capture data in a first contact rather than as a follow-up. This would include but is not limited to the following: demographic data, food preferences/allergies, chapter share/display/merchandise, et al. The external t-shirt ordering system implemented in 2025 also reduced the number of shirts sold dramatically, with even seasoned convention attendees missing the fine print for deadlines.







**Committee Reports, Spring 2025**  
(September 2024 – March 2025)

**Committee:** Executive Committee

**Committee Chair:** Lexey Bartlett

**Committee Members:** Ami Comeford, Leigh Dillard, Matt Hlinak, Shannin Schroeder, Kevin Stemmler

**Summary of Committee Activities:**

**1. Budget Review:**

Since the Fall Board meeting, much of our committee work has focused on budget review, which is a key responsibility of the Executive Committee. We worked carefully through the budget from October through mid-December, with multiple rounds of questions, clarifications, and adjustments, before we felt confident in presenting the proposed 2025 budget to the Board for review and a vote. Because of the timing with the holidays and university winter breaks, we were able to reach a final vote of approval by mid-January. However, we are also in the process of switching to a fiscal year that runs from July-June, which is better aligned with the academic year that governs much of our activity. We will meet to review the Executive Director's budget report and proposed budget for 2025-2026 just after this report is submitted so that they may be presented to the full Board for review and approval. However, these tasks help to fulfill our assigned Strategic Plan objective 7.b. around improving budget transparency, assessment, and financial planning, and there has been much work required over the past several years to achieve that objective, which we are finally seeing come to fruition with this latest document.

**2. Sigma Kappa Delta merger into the English Honor Societies:** We have continued to work with the Central Office and Sigma Kappa Delta to finalize our merger. We had a few meetings during the fall to discuss remaining issues and have addressed other questions through email discussion. On the Board, we have included representatives from Sigma Kappa Delta on several of our committees so that our shared activities and projects, and potential sharing of other systems like member databases, can be planned together going forward.

**3. New AR/AAR pilot along with an Alumni Advisory Council:** This structure continues to evolve. After the resignation of the Associate Alumni Representative in late fall, we discussed and appointed an interim AAR because Tiffany Nolde has been so active in developing a variety of activities and needed assistance immediately. Two changes will be implemented going forward: the appointment of a second AR this spring, which will allow overlapping terms of ARs, and the removal of the "Associate" designation. In addition, the Executive Committee has agreed to include faculty members of Sigma Tau Delta in the alumni group, which adds another group that the AAC can draw on for membership and support.

**4. EHS Logo:** We have reviewed the first round of promising designs from our contracted graphic designer, Maria Neale, and submitted feedback to her for a second iteration of designs, which will be delivered Friday, March 14.

**5. 2026 Convention Co-Chairs:** One of our committee responsibilities is designating future convention chairs, and that task has been accomplished, thanks especially to this year's convention co-chairs, who form half of our committee.

**6. Constitutional Change Vote:** We are expecting the results of the chapter vote on the proposed changes to the Constitution as these reports are due to be submitted, since the deadline was March 7.



**Recommendations or Resolutions:** None at this time.

**Special Concerns:**

- When we are designating Convention Chairs/Co-Chairs, we should consider their roles in other committees and consider whether the workload or scheduling of meetings might affect the work of other committees on the Board.
- The current political and economic situation of the United States, especially its likely effects on higher education, must be something we consider in relation to our budget, as well as its effects on our constituents. We must make sure that we are able to continue to offer our core programs in their support for our members, who may be vulnerable to reduced support from other sources.





**Partnerships–Felicia Steele**  
**Committee Reports, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – April, 2025)



**Committee:** Partnerships Committee

**Committee Chair:** Felicia Steele

**Committee Members:** Matt Hlinak, Jeannine Szostak, Michaelann Nelson, Kevin Stemmler, Kelly Taylor, Chris Lockwood, Tiffany Nolde, Matthew Chinique, Kaylee Jo Stocks, Donna Newsome, Serena Richards

**Summary of Committee Activities:**

The primary role of the committee is to coordinate and manage our partnerships with outside entities alongside the central office. Kevin Stemmler and Chris Lockwood have been instrumental in extending our partnerships with non-profit entities and educational institutions, brokering the partnerships with LULAC, Lamda Literary, and Girton College,

The bulk of the committee work is directed by the chair in consultation with the central office in each cycle, although other members of the committee have been active as readers for the internship programs (W. W. Norton and Penguin/Random House) and for the internship stipends.

The internship programs continue to have large numbers of applicants, although they are down significantly from last year:

**Internship Stipend**

The internship stipend continues to be underutilized. In the Fall cycle, we received one application for a student interning with LitQuake, a literary festival in San Francisco.

**Penguin/Random House**

The Penguin/Random House internship for the Winter 2025 cycle had 107 applicants.

**W. W. Norton**

In the fall cycle of applications, we received 26 applications. Two candidates were interviewed, but neither selected. Both of them received positive feedback from the company, nonetheless.

The NCTE and MLA internships will run in the spring cycle.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:**

I recommend that we include a "statement of honesty" in our applications where students affirm that they have not used AI tools to help them as they generate their application materials. I think that we should hold our students to a high standard for their applications.

**Special Concerns:**





Regents Committee–Kassia Krone / Felicia Steele  
**Committee Reports, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – April, 2025)



**Committee:** Regents Committee

**Committee Chair:** Felicia Steele & Kassia Krone

**Committee Members:** Felicia Steele, Kassia Krone, Sonia Mae Brown, Amy Gates, Michaelann Nelson, Heidi Williams

**Summary of Committee Activities:** The Regents committee met twice since this past board meeting to discuss procedures having to do with the selection of Associate Student Representatives in the event that an ASR steps down.

We also met to discuss convention planning.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:**

**Special Concerns:**

We do need to coordinate with the central office to ensure that the current version of the Regents Handbook is available on the website. If possible, this task will be completed by the time we come to convention.





## Scholarships and Academic Awards Committee–Amy Gates

### Committee Reports, Spring, 2025

(September 2024 – April 2025)



**Committee:** Scholarships and Academic Awards

**Committee Chair:** Amy Gates

**Committee Members:** Lexey Bartlett (Vice Chair) | Sonia Mae Brown | Carie King (Affiliate) | Jessica McCole (CO) | Felicia Steele

**Summary of Committee Activities:** Following the fall Board Meeting, the committee met via Microsoft Teams on 23 October 2024. Gates reported that, following a round of suggestions and revisions by committee members via email, the FY2025 essay prompts had been submitted to McCole. We returned to two (rather than the centenary three) prompts to streamline student choices, and we ensured both prompts are more directly connected to the Convention theme to assist applicants and evaluators in crafting and judging those essays appropriately. McCole has included some committee members in the pre-cycle testing along with Central Office staff. This seems to be working well.

Bartlett, Gates, McCole, and Steele worked to adjust dates for the 2024-2025 Award Cycle to allow for adequate turnaround time between cycles and one week following application close for letters of recommendation. The revised schedule is as follows:

Sigma Tau Delta	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Applications Open	Oct. 21-Nov. 11	Jan. 13-Feb.3	Mar. 10-Apr. 7	Jun. 23-Jul. 14
Letters of Rec/Membership Checks	Nov. 18	Feb. 10	Apr. 14	Jul. 21
Evaluations	Nov. 20-Dec. 16	Feb. 12-24	Apr. 16-May 19	Jul. 23-Aug. 11
Announcement	Dec. 23	Mar. 3	Jun. 2	Aug. 18
Recipients Confirm	Jan. 6	Mar. 17	Jun. 16	Sept. 1

To assist in building a larger pool of evaluators, an evaluator survey was created, edited, approved, and sent by McCole in late October 2024. The results were good, but we will likely continue to need to recruit evaluators, particularly for the large spring cycle.

The committee has collaborated to plan a Convention roundtable on requesting and writing letters of recommendation, and the panel will represent a variety of perspectives.

Gates worked with McCole and other testers to revise some of the language on questions, and Gates and McCole made adjustments to the rubrics in AwardSpring to align more closely with the submission requirements, most notably giving “Awards” and “Activities” separate lines on the rubrics. Bartlett revised the description of the Summer Program Scholarship. This scholarship has been woefully underutilized, and we hoped that a clearer description of purpose, audience, and possible applications might increase interest. McCole publicized the Summer Program Scholarship via *Footnotes* on 28 January 2025 and featured it on social media. The Summer Program Scholarship is the only scholarship in the winter cycle; this winter 2025 cycle, we received only one application. Promoting, or perhaps adjusting, this opportunity will continue to be a topic of conversation.

Chairs of Scholarships and Academic Awards (Gates) and Partnerships (Steele) committees, supported by Namon Kent and McCole, held a webinar on 6 March 2025 to promote and answer questions about the spring awards cycle. Kent piloted use of StreamYard to live stream and record the event, which seemed to go well.

The fall 2024 and winter 2025 cycles have both gone well. The spring cycle is currently open as of 10 March 2025. We hope and expect that our most complex cycle of the year will go much more smoothly this year.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:** Not at this time.

**Special Concerns:** While we commend the creation of new opportunities for students and advisors, scholarships and awards that emerge from outside this committee and are managed and evaluated outside AwardSpring cause confusion for the committee and for Sigma Tau Delta members and Advisors. We on the committee cannot answer questions about these opportunities because our knowledge is limited to what is in the same emails members receive, and it is not always clear where to direct questions. This situation has come up a couple of times this year, most recently during the “Sigma Tau Delta Pays You Back” webinar with Felicia Steele and Amy Gates where we had several questions about the Girton College scholarships that we could not answer.





**Service Committee–Kelly Taylor / Kevin Stemmler**  
**Committee Reports, Spring 2025**  
**(September 2024 – March 2025)**



**Committee:** Service

**Committee Chair:** Kelly Taylor and Kevin Stemmler

**Committee Members:** Kevin Stemmler, Kelly Taylor, Chris Lockwood, Katie Mudd, Tiffany Nolde, Isaiah Russell, Sonia Mae Brown, Felicia Steele, Zach Brady, Carie King and Emily Palmisano

**Summary of Committee Activities:**

As a joint initiative with Convention Committee, Student Leadership, and Service Committee, we launched the Book Club Kit project. As SL began work on many of the writers doing webinars for NEHS, Convention Committee co-chairs requested that we work on abbreviated versions of Book Club Kits for as many of the Convention speakers/LitFest participants as possible. We helped to highlight the service element of using books in chapter meetings (the original intention for creating a Common Reader at the initial meeting of the Service Committee in September 2000) and provided suggestions for service projects as well as links to organizations related to each Book Club Kit.

To further our commitment to using books for service projects, we decided to highlight the use of books in prisons. We proposed a Thursday professional development panel for the convention program, alliteratively, inviting attendees/vendors Arlan Hess from City Books and Adlai Yeomans from White Whale Book Store to present. Both book sellers will discuss the various ways they use their independent bookstores to support community service, including books to prisons, encouraging emerging writers, and developing events to highlight community members and their work (i.e. White Whale's meTamorphosis: a queer and trans led reading series, Read the Room open mic nights, and author readings). Additionally, we worked with Lambda Literary to obtain boxes of books from last year's Lammy Award winners and short-listed authors. The University of North Georgia chapter arranged to pick up the books (thank you, Sophia!) And deliver them to Pittsburgh for various uses. Some of the books will also be used for UNG's service partnership with Books for Keeps in Athens, Georgia. It is important to note that the two Little Free Libraries at the UNG Gainesville campus is a nice complement to the work NEHS has done with Little Free Libraries. This partnership inspired other chapters to create Little Free Libraries on their campuses, which was evident in the applications for this year's Service Project Grants. Members of the Service Committee were responsible for reading those submissions and awarding the grants.

Speaking of Project Grants, Felicia suggested that project grants could be used for chapters who are able to translate their book club activities into service projects and we encouraged chapters to do this (hence the abbreviated Book Club Kits). Katie advertised project grants in the Footnotes for October. Kelly provided information on how the book club kits work. We continue to work with Autumn and Kelly to promote the newly created Book Club awards for chapters that are housed in Student Leadership.

In terms of service partnerships, Kevin and Chris worked with Lambda Literary to gather Sigma Tau Delta volunteers to judge for the Lammy Awards. We had 90 applications and 27 members of our Societies were selected to serve as judges for this prestigious award. In addition to serving the profession of English by helping to provide professional development opportunities for our judges, the Service Committee arranged to have our judges donate their honorariums to the Society as an act of service to the organization. These donations to Sigma Tau Delta help fund Lambda Literary's partnership with us, making it another service project to come from this committee. Kelly, Chris and Kevin judged the many submissions we received for the first Lambda Literary Lammy Awards Internship and we are happy to report that we have had all positive feedback from our contact. We are currently reading for the second Lambda Literary Internship for the Lambda Emerging Writers Retreat. As an aside, to show our Society's commitment to both service and to





support “one of ours,” the committee assisted with a Pittsburgh based program called VolunTOTS, designed to have children from ages 2 and up participate in community service projects. One of our alum is instrumental in planning and coordinating VolunTOTS events and fundraisers. Our personal support (books for children) helped raise money to provide funding for a communication device for a child with limited communication skills.

We continue discussions with the Jane Austen Society for potential Sigma Tau Delta service or to create a service-based internship. Similar projects are in the works as well. Chris and Kevin worked with Girton College, University of Cambridge, to establish opportunities for alumni/retired faculty advisors to apply for the Life Long Learning summer program. As a Girton alum, Chris was instrumental in setting up the contact. We had 65 applications for this summer’s program, providing a chance to reward eight Sigma Tau Delta alumni for their service to the organization. As a result, we are in talks to establish a summer 2026 study abroad program at Cambridge for our Sigma Tau Delta undergraduate members.

In partnership with LULAC (The League of United Latin American Citizens) we successfully launched the first LULAC/Sigma Tau Delta co-sponsored writing contest to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. We had amazing participation from Sigma Tau Delta and NEHS members.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:** Continue to explore service projects, awards, and opportunities. Continue to launch additional Book Club/Book Club Kits in the next few months. Continue to promote Society webinars. Continue to advertise LULAC sponsored contests for Sigma Tau Delta/Sigma Kappa Delta/NEHS students to celebrate Hispanic Heritage for Fall 2026. Continue to assist the co-chairs of the New Orleans Sigma Tau Delta Convention on service oriented programs that will allow us to continue to receive funding from LULAC and Lambda Literary.

**Special Concerns:** We need to work on creating additional crossover opportunities between committees. Although we have already been working with Partnerships & Internships, Scholarships & Awards, Convention, and Student Leadership committees, there is always room to expand. This continued crossover will help us to promote the work being done by our Society’s membership. Also, we would like to find more ways to highlight the accomplishments of Society members and continue to promote the work being done that supports the spirit of “one of ours.”





## Strategic Planning Committee–Leigh G. Dillard



### **Committee Reports, Spring, 2025** (September 2024 – April 2025)

**Committee:** Strategic Planning

**Committee Chair:** Leigh G. Dillard

**Committee Members:** Lexey Bartlett, Ami Comeford, Matt Hlinak, Chris Lockwood, Joan Reeves, Leigh Ann Rhea, Jeannine Szostak,

#### **Summary of Committee Activities:**

Distributed SWOT analysis to all board and CO members for input from various stakeholders. I'm in the process of organizing the results from survey, which I'll present to the SP Committee in Pittsburgh, to begin discussion of priorities for the next strategic plan.

New Strategic Plan forthcoming.

#### **Recommendations or Resolutions:**

#### **Special Concerns:**





## Committee Reports, Spring, 2025

(September, 2024 – April, 2025)

**Committee:** Student Leadership

**Committee Chair:** Autumn Koors-Foltz & Kelly Taylor

**Committee Members:** Matthew Chinique, Zach Brady, Arista Elderkin, Sophia Jockell, Cyrah Johnson, Carmen Lok, Jo Mahlum, Emily Palmisano, Loustella Perry, Isaiah Russel, Kaylee Jo Stocks

### Summary of Committee Activities:

Between the 2024 fall Board meeting and March 18th, 2025, the Student Leadership Committee has successfully executed, or continues to execute, the following responsibilities:

- Held monthly meetings in October, November, January, February to share updates and stay in communication about all committee operations and responsibilities.
- Worked as two asynchronous task forces throughout the month of December to plan both our Student Leadership Workshop and Literary Pub Trivia events to be held at convention. SLs planning the Student Leadership Workshop curated the design of what we envision the event space to look like, solicited plans for each individual workshop station.
- The Literary Pub Trivia team designed signage for the event, wrote and uploaded questions to our society Kahoot! site, and planned for the layout and timing of the event itself. The event will again be sponsored by NCTE.
- Asking a number of Student Leaders to introduce speakers at convention, both at keynote presentations and at various workshops. SLs assigned to these responsibilities worked with Kevin Stemmler to draft their introductions.
- Manning book signings and other author events as needed.
- Social media coverage (restructured in a way with fewer platforms and less SLs involved.)
- Some SLs mentored Research in the Round participants to help them prepare for their presentations at convention.
- Filmed and submitted Common Reader and spotlight author videos, which were published to society social media, to encourage engagement and discussion of “When My Brother Was an Aztec” and Willa Cather.
- Had members serve on various committees and task forces as assigned within the Society, working toward their respective goals and charges.
- Gathered and submitted Humans of Sigma Tau Delta submissions from various members, advisors, and alumni of the society.
- Posted consistently on regional Instagram accounts.
- Participated in the creation of various book club kits in collaboration different committees in order to highlight authors attending convention and authors whose work pertain to the work of Sigma Tau Delta.
  - These book club kits include kits for Kassia Krone, Benjamin Alire Saenz, Toni Morrison, Cynthia Kadohoda, Willa Cather, and Natalie Diaz.
- Prepared for the spring Board meeting and convention by submitting Board reports, making travel arrangements, and meeting in advance of the in-person meeting to go over expectations and guidelines.
- Stayed in consistent communication with one another to ensure prompt response to all committee affairs.

**Recommendations or Resolutions:**

The Student Leadership committee recommends that the current system of appointing SAs (appointed in alternate years with a junior/senior model) be codified in the bylaws (specifically Bylaw IV, section II/III). Perhaps a quality that Regents might heighten in their search for SLs is their commitment to the timeframe and duties—if they're able and willing to commit as an essential criteria and not just an expectation.

**Special Concerns:**

The Student Leadership had a high rate of turnover, non-attendance at convention, and resignation. We are considering what factors might mitigate this turnover, but also what may lead to it.





## Alumni Advisory Council/ Task Force Reports



### Alumni Advisory Council Committee Reports, Spring, 2025 (September, 2024 – April, 2025)

**Committee:** Alumni Advisory Council

**Committee Chair:** Tiffany Nolde

**Committee Members:** William Saccavino, Katie Mudd, Jessica McCole

#### Summary of Committee Activities:

Since the Fall Board meeting, the Alumni Advisory Council has met on a more consistent, monthly basis. We have discussed Katie's work on the new website, and what information should be on the alumni page. The council, with the assistance of the convention chairs, discussed and planned the topics and structure for the Alumni Workshop. The Alumni Workshop will consist of structured table topics for alumni to participate in. These topics include education, writing and editing, freelance work, nontraditional fields of English, and life after graduation. There will be a timer set, so that they can move to another topic if they choose to. We also discussed the topic options for professional development sessions with the help of Kevin Stemmler. We have begun discussions on creating the Alumni Representative handbook utilizing the Student Leader, Student Advisor, and Regent Handbooks as a guide. The goal is to have a draft of that completed this summer.

#### Recommendations or Resolutions:

None at this time.

#### Special Concerns:

None at this time.





## Past Presidents Advisory Council–Shannin Schroeder



### Committee Reports, Spring 2025 (September 2024 – March 2025)

**Committee:** Past Presidents Council

**Committee Chairs:** Shannin Schroeder

**Committee Members:** Simone Billings, Judith Clark, Larry Dennis, Helen Lojek, Kevin Stemmler, and other Deltans and Past Presidents in attendance at the 2025 Convention

#### Summary of Committee Activities:

Based on an exchange of emails sparked by my late fall letter to all past presidents and Deltans, the perks provided to our Deltans and past presidents are sufficient to keep them attending and moderating at conventions and participating as evaluators.

One Council member pointed out that her retirement gave her the time to volunteer and felt like service she *should* do as a Deltan. Another member reminds us that, while some have retired from full-time teaching, they have not “retired” from Sigma Tau Delta and are often still active within chapters, including evaluating and accompanying students to conventions. And past Advisors often mentor the next generation of Advisors who step into their roles. One response noted that, while one of the new co-Advisors at her university was herself a Sigma Tau Delta alumna, she had never attended convention and had probably lost touch with her former chapter at her alma mater.

Retired faculty members and Advisors have slipped off our radar, in part because we do not have a designation for this category of past active academics, as well as because (according to one Council member) “we were also told that there would be resistance to efforts to organize or create a title for such folks.”

On behalf of the Council, I recommend that

- a) the Society expand the definition of “alumni” to include past Board members, former Advisors [possibly after a certain number of years], and retired faculty members of the organization; and
- b) our Director of Society Operations reach out to collect “exit” data from Advisors who are stepping down from the position to understand their reasons for doing so.

The Council members will continue to discuss this evolving definition of alumni at our Past Presidents Council Luncheon.

#### Special Concerns:

One Deltan replied that she was pleased to serve on the Council, though she’d “never been president.” As Deltans deserve an increasing role on the Council, we as a Society might reconsider a more inclusive name for this group.





## Budget

**Budget Report, Spring, 2025**  
(September, 2024 – March, 2025)

Please see budget document.

